A STUDY OF PETER LIEBERSON'S *NERUDA SONGS* AND THEIR COMPANION, *SONGS OF LOVE AND SORROW*

by

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INTRODUCTION

Peter Lieberson was drawn to a book with a bright pink cover in the Albuquerque airport shortly after he and mezzo-soprano Lorraine Hunt had met and fallen in love. Lorraine adored the color pink. She loved all things pink: pink champagne, pink furniture, pink walls; pink was even the color of her home in Santa Fe, N.M.[1] The pink book that caught Peter's eye was a published copy of Pablo Neruda's *100 Love Sonnets: Cien sonetos de amor*, which the poet dedicated to his muse and third wife, Matilde Urrutia. Lieberson was immediately moved by the emotional intensity of the poems, and thought that he must set them for his beloved Lorraine. "They were so passionate and beautiful and the words were words that I would've spoken to Lorraine, and I thought, immediately, on the spot, that I must set these – at some point – for Lorraine."[2]

Mr. Lieberson was presented with the perfect opportunity several years later when the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony Orchestra co-commissioned the *Neruda Songs,* Lieberson's settings of five of the sonnets in their original Spanish, dedicated to his beloved Lorraine. The songs were premiered on May 20th, 2005 with the LA Philharmonic, Lorraine as featured soloist, and Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting. Ms. Lieberson gave a second performance with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the baton of James Levine on November 25th, 2005, at which time her health was declining due to breast cancer. The recording of this performance was nominated for a Grammy Award, and the music was runner-up for the 2006 Pulitzer Prize. Ms. Lieberson lost her battle with breast cancer on July 3rd, 2006 at the young age of 52, only 8 months after her recorded performance with the Boston

[1] Katherine Boyle, "'Neruda Songs' at the Kennedy Center: A lost love's legacy," *The Washington Post*, September 27, 2012, accessed January 5, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/music/neruda-songs-at-the-kennedy-center-a-lost-loves-legacy/2012/09/27/7dc00588-072b-11e2-afff-d6c7f20a83bf_story.html.
[2] Jeff Lunden, "Lieberson's 'Neruda Songs,' Tracing Love's Arc," *NPR Music*, December 30, 2006, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.npr.org/s.php?sId=6696483&m=1.

Symphony. She was posthumously awarded a Grammy for Best Classical Vocal Performance for the *Neruda Songs* in 2008.[3]

Shortly after the premiere of the *Neruda Songs*, Maestro Levine asked Lieberson to compose a second cycle, as a sort of "sequel" to the *Songs.* This was just before Ms. Lieberson passed away, and after Lieberson himself was diagnosed with lymphoma. Lieberson wrote, "I had no heart for composing at that time and wondered whether I would be able to compose any more at all, considering my condition."[4] It took Mr. Lieberson two years to rediscover the poetry of Pablo Neruda, and in 2010, he composed a cycle for baritone and orchestra, also set to five of his poems. The cycle was written for baritone Gerald Finley, and premiered on March 25th, 2010 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. It was only a year later, on April 23rd 2011, that Mr. Lieberson lost his battle with lymphoma at the age of 64.[5] The full score of *Songs of Love and Sorrow* is not available for purchase, and a piano/vocal version of the score does not exist. I was able to rent the perusal score of the baritone cycle through the G. Schirmer Rental Library, and was kindly given access to the archived performance of Mr. Finley's premiere performance of the *Songs of Love and Sorrow* by the G. Schirmer Publishing Company. According to G. Schirmer's perusal score policy, reproduction of any portion of a perusal score is not permitted. Therefore, I have not included musical examples in Chapter 4 of my document.

The two song cycles by Peter Lieberson depict the emotional complexity of love in their own unique languages, both musically and textually. The deep personal and emotional connections of both song cycles and the knowledge of the journey of Lorraine and Peter Lieberson's relationship give performers the invaluable opportunity to learn more about the songs' origins, and why Peter chose these specific sonnets. And we must not neglect the love between Pablo Neruda and Matilde Urrutia: the

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[3] Deanna Hudgins, "Neruda Songs," *Los Angeles Philharmonic Association*, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.laphil.com/philpedia/music/neruda-songs-peter-lieberson.
[4] Peter Lieberson, "Program Note by the Composer," *Songs of Love and Sorrow, Boston Symphony Orchestra* http://worldcat.org/digitalarchive/content/server15982.contentdm.oclc.org/BSYMO/PROG/TRUSVolume13/Pub411_2009-2010_BSO_Vol02_Subscription_Wk20.pdf
[5] Zachary Woolfe, "Peter Lieberson, Composer Inspired by Buddhism, Dies at 64," *The New York Times,* April 23, 2011, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/24/arts/music/peter-lieberson-64-composer-inspired-by-buddhism-dies.html?_r=0

inspiration of the poetry itself. My hope is that, through my study of the artists who made these song cycles possible and an in-depth look at the words and music, performers (both singers and instrumentalists alike) will gain a detailed perspective of each song, which will undoubtedly enhance rehearsal and performance of each cycle. We will begin with a closer look at the creators' personal lives and the loves of their lives.

Chapter 1: PETER LIEBERSON: HIS WORLD, HIS MUSIC, HIS MUSE

Mr. Lieberson was born on October 25th, 1946 in New York, NY into a home that was no stranger to artistry. His father, Goddard Lieberson, was the chief of Columbia Records at the time, and his mother, Vera Zorina, a ballerina and stage-and-screen actress (also former wife of legendary dancer and choreographer George Balanchine). As described by Morris Rosenzweig in *American Composers: the Emerging Generation*, Mr. Lieberson was a post-war baby boomer, "reared on that peculiar mixture of pop culture and modernism."[6] Zachary Woolfe of the New York Times included a vivid, insightful description of Peter Lieberson's musical style in his obituary on April 23rd, 2011:

> Mr. Lieberson was an eloquent voice in the generation of composers seeking to infuse the thorny rigors of academic music with a more accessible, lyrical sound. Reviewing a 2008 concert of Mr. Lieberson's works in *The New York Times*, Allan Kozinn praised his "cohesive, energetic and intensely communicative style, with brainy, atonal surfaces that attest to his post-tonal pedigree and a current of lyricism and drama that gives this music its warmth and passion."[7]

We can trace Mr. Lieberson's musical influences back to various genres and cultures, contributing to his unique and distinctive compositional style.

As a child, Peter would go to Broadway shows his father was recording, and rework the familiar show tunes with chromatic jazz chords at home afterwards. The budding composer taught himself harmony by deciphering the voicings on recordings of jazz pianist Bill Evans.[8] In his early years, Peter was also exposed to works of Webern, Schoenberg, and Stravisnky, recordings of whom his father produced. Mr. Lieberson did not major in music as an undergraduate, but went on to Columbia University for his masters in music to study with Charles Wuorinen.[9] It was here that Lieberson was exposed to the

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[6] Morris Rosenzweig, "Contemplated Balances: A Brief View of Arthur Krieger and Peter Lieberson," *American Composers: the Emerging Generation*. Vol. 10 pt. 1 (1994): 101.
[7] Woolfe, "Peter Lieberson, Composer Inspired by Buddhism, Dies at 64."
[8] Ibid.
[9] Rosenzweig, 101.

12-tone technique. He said that he used this compositional technique as "a generalized means of expression rather than a way to compose."[10] During his time at Columbia, Lieberson became interested in Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhism, and practiced regularly. He moved to Boulder, CO in 1976 to continue his studies with Buddhist master Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche. There, Lieberson met and married Ellen Kearny, another of Trungpa Rinpoche's students. Ellen and Peter moved to Boston to co-direct Shambhala Training (a Buddhist meditation and cultural program). Their tenure lasted from 1988 to 1993. Prior to his time with Shambhala Training, Lieberson received his PhD from Brandeis University, and taught composition at Harvard University from 1984 – 1988.[11]

After 1994, Mr. Lieberson devoted his time primarily to composition, but "Buddhist practice remained a central theme in his work."[12] In 1997, the Sante Fe Opera premiered Lieberson's first opera, *Ashoka's Dream*, which was based on the life of the brutal tyrant, King Ashoka Maurya, emperor of India in the third century B.C., who renounced violence after converting to Buddhism. Anthony Tommasini writes in *The New York Times* of the 1997 premiere, "As in his instrumental works, his language here is thickly chromatic with whiffs of serial techniques, yet the music is harmonically grounded and lucid. A sinewy lyrical thread runs through the score, and the level of inventiveness is continually striking."[13] At this point in his career, Mr. Lieberson had very little experience writing for the voice, let alone composing an entire opera. This was evident at moments in *Ashoka's Dream*, according to Tommasini. He writes, "But Mr. Lieberson's writing for the voice is not always effective. Many passages are wistful and singable. But he sets whole portions of the text in virtually monotone recitations, often lying uncomfortably low in the voice."[14] It was during his time in Santa Fe that Mr. Lieberson became close with Lorraine Hunt, who was singing the role of Ashoka's second wife, Trirashka. Tommasini praises

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[10] Woolfe, "Peter Lieberson, Composer Inspired by Buddhism, Dies at 64."
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Anthony Tommasini, "A Man Unafraid to Change, and Then to Sing About It," *The New York Times*, July 30, 1997, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/1997/07/30/arts/a-man-unafraid-to-change-and-then-to-sing-about-it.html.
[14] Ibid.

Ms. Hunt for her "shimmering sound and nobility of phrasing." [15] Even before they met, Peter heard a recording of Lorraine, and said that he "got chills hearing her sing."[16] He said, "I realized it was a kind of force that I was listening to. It wasn't the trained voice so much that impressed me…it was the soul behind it."[17]

Lorraine and Peter were married in 1999. It is simply undeniable that Lorraine was Peter's muse; the composer wrote some of his most lyrically expressive music for Lorraine. She taught Peter how to truly write for the voice, and their nine-year romance, according to a former student of Lieberson's, "gave his music the glow of earthly romance."[18] Lieberson said during an interview with WBUR Boston that "she was an intensely expressive person…she gave everything to her art, but she was like that all the time, with everything." He goes on to say that Lorraine's deep passion for words changed the way he wrote music, "I learned so much from her, and I learned how she carried a whole piece through with the melodies and the importance of the word to her that she was singing. In fact, that's how I began to think. You don't just set words — you feel words and then some kind of melody comes out of that."[19]

Mr. Lieberson wrote the *Neruda Songs* in 2005, which won the University of Louisville's Grawemeyer Award in 2008, and which Tim Page of the Washington Post called "one of the most extraordinarily affecting artistic gifts ever created by one lover to another."[20] Together, the five sonnets tell the story of love's journey, from passion and lust, ecstasy and triumph, to sorrow and loss. Adding to the poignancy of this cycle is the fact that Lorraine performed these songs in her final year, after canceling most of her other engagements. Alex Ross of *The New Yorker* writes, "There is a dimension to these songs which is especially moving and almost too much to take, at times…because it is about the

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[15] Ibid.
[16] Lunden, "Lieberson's 'Neruda Songs,' Tracing Love's arc."
[17] Ibid.
[18] Justin Davidson, "Accessing a Place of Shaggy Wildness," *The New York Times*, May 13, 2011, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/15/arts/music/peter-liebersons-path-as-a-composer.html?_r=0.
[19] Andrea Shea, "Songs of Love and Sorrow…And Love Again," *WBUR Boston (NPR)*, March 25, 2010, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.wbur.org/2010/03/25/songs-of-love-and-sorrow.
[20] Woolfe, "Peter Lieberson."

love between two people and about the impermanence of love."[21] The final song translates in English: "My love, if I die and you don't…".

In an interview with NPR in 2004, Lorraine says that Peter did not have to do any consulting with her at all while composing the *Neruda Songs.* "We'd been together a while, so he was really tuned into my voice, and so I didn't really have to say much at all about what he [had] written for me. He was right on, as far as range and technical ease of the vocal lines."[22] James Levine called the songs "a kind of miracle."[23] He told NPR during a 2006 interview, "We didn't have any idea that we would lose Lorraine so soon…but Peter could hardly have written a more appropriate piece, in every respect – to her talent, to her artistry, to her emotion and intelligence and everything that she had – which was really extraordinary."[24] While Peter began as a composer of 12-tone music, Levine says that with the *Neruda Songs*, the composer was "inspired to another kind of music…These songs, I think, fall in the category of very great and very accessible."[25]

Maestro Levine was so enthusiastic about these songs that shortly after their premiere, he asked Peter if he would compose a second song cycle, as a sort of "companion cycle" to the *Neruda Songs*. "And so I thought I'd write a kind of scene for Lorraine," Peter said.[26] Only a few months after their premiere, however, Lorraine passed away at the age of 52. Peter had been diagnosed with lymphoma around this time, and was "just a few months away from dying [himself]."[27] Mourning the loss of his dear Lorraine and undergoing brutal treatments for advanced lymphoma, it took Lieberson years before rediscovering the poetry of Neruda. He was then struck by a quote of the Chilean poet, which is part of the fifth sonnet of the *Neruda Songs*, "He said love is like a river. It has no birth and death, just changing

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[21] Ibid.
[22] Lunden, "Lieberson's 'Neruda Songs,' Tracing Love's Arc."
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Andrea Shea, "Songs of Love and Sorrow…And Love Again."
[27] Andrea Shea, "Lieberson's 'Songs of Love and Sorrow and New Life," *NPR Music*, March 30, 2010, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=125194412.

lands and changing lips…I found it to be very true myself, because when I was really recovering from grueling treatment, all of a sudden I fell in love again, so these things do happen."[28]

In 2008, Lieberson married Rinchen Lhamo, a longtime friend and former Buddhist nun, and re-discovered "his own capacity to love, in a much broader sense of the word."[29] He wrote *Songs of Love and Sorrow* for baritone friend Gerald Finley, who described his first reading of the songs: "'I was very quiet, because [*Songs of Love and Sorrow*] are very intimate, very private, and completely heartfelt.'"[30] Lieberson agrees, "Elements of Lorraine and our love are definitely in this piece, and things that she evoked in me and that I remember about her…and then there's also elements of my new love, and there's elements of life that has taken place over the last three years."[31]

The premiere of *Songs of Love and Sorrow* received excellent reviews. Mark DeVoto of *The Boston Music Intelligencer* wrote, "The text setting is crystalline throughout, the declamation wide-ranging but always comprehensible, the accompaniment richly supportive and never overpowering."[32] DeVoto also draws connections between Lieberson's cycle and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*. We know that Lorraine was one of the great Mahler interpreters of our generation, and it could very well be that Peter included Mahlerian elements in *Songs of Love and Sorrow* as a tribute to his late wife. Before our analysis of Lieberson's compositions, we must get to know our poet, Pablo Neruda.

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[28] Ibid.
[29] Andrea Shea, "Songs of Love and Sorrow…And Love Again."
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Mark DeVoto, "Lieberson Songs of Love and Sorrow with Gerald Finley Premiered at BSO," *The Boston Musical Intelligencer*, March 27, 2010, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.classical-scene.com/2010/03/27/lieberson-songs-of-love-and-sorrow-with-gerald-finley-premiered-at-bso/.

Chapter 2: THE UNTOLD LIFE OF PABLO NERUDA AND THE *CIEN SONETOS DE AMOR*

> How poetry is born: it comes from invisible heights. It is secret and obscure in origin, solitary and fragrant and, like a river, it will dissolve anything that falls in its path…It will irrigate the fields and will provide bread for the hungry…[33]– Pablo Neruda

Pablo Neruda, born as Neftalí Ricardo Reyes Basoalto on July 12th, 1904 in Parral, Chile, is known today as one of the great writers of the 20th century. Neruda began his literary career at the age of 13, at which time he adopted the pseudonym Pablo Neruda presumably after the Czech poet Jan Neruda.[34] Adam Feinstein writes in his biography *Pablo Neruda: A Passion for Life*, "He was an energetic lover of wine (Chilean, above all), women (he had three wives and numerous mistresses) and song."[35] In 1924, Pablo published one of his most celebrated works, *Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada* (*Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair*), after which he devoted his literary career to verse.[36]

Not only a poet, Neruda was also a diplomat and a politician. He was a profoundly complex man, acknowledging the contradictions within himself as his "most perfidious enemy."[37] In 1927, Neruda began his diplomatic career, which took him to Burma, Ceyon, Java, Singapore, Buenos Aires, Barcelona, and Madrid.[38] It was during this difficult period of relentless travel that Neruda experienced his literary breakthrough with the composition of his "esoteric surrealistic poems, *Residencia en la Tierra (Residence on Earth)* (1933)."[39] He also began attracting controversy with his poems praising political figures such as Joseph Stalin, Fulgencio Batista, and Fidel Castro.[40] In 1943, Neruda returned to Chile, and officially joined the Communist Party of Chile two years later. By 1948, the Communist Party was under siege, and

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[33] Adam Feinstein, *Pablo Neruda: A Passion for Life* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004), 296.
[34] Ibid., 23.
[35] Ibid., 1.
[36] Ibid., 40.
[37] Ibid., 2.
[38] "Pablo Neruda – Biographical" The Official Website of the Nobel Prize, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1971/neruda-bio.html.
[39] Ibid.
[40] "Pablo Neruda Biography," The Biography.com Website, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.biography.com/people/pablo-neruda-9421737#diplomatic-career.

Neruda fled the country. Five years later, the Chilean government withdrew its order to seize leftist writers and political figures, and the poet returned to his country.[41] It was at this time that Neruda's work began to stray from the exceedingly political. He spent the last twenty years of his life producing "some of the finest love poetry."[42] His poetry also began to echo themes of nature, and comparisons of nature with the sensuality of women. Manuel Duran and Margery Safir wrote in *Earth Tones: The Poetry of Pablo Neruda*: Neruda gives us "time to examine a particular plant, a stone, a flower, a bird, an aspect of modern life, at leisure. We look at the object, handle it, turn it around, all the sides are examined with love, care, attention. This is, in many ways, Neruda…at his best."[43]

Neruda's political career was at its peak when the Chilean Communist Party nominated him for president in the 1970 elections. He soon withdrew his nomination, however, after learning that his friend, Socialist Salvador Allende, would be running. Neruda was then appointed as ambassador to France, a position in which he would serve for the final two years of his life, shortly after discovering that he had prostate cancer. While he was serving in Paris, the poet was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Neruda's health continued to decline, and he was forced to resign his post and return to Chile in 1973, where he died on September 23rd, 1973, only a few days after a right-wing military coup killed his friend and Chilean president Allende.[44]

What we do not find in the majority of biographical resources of Neruda are the events in his personal life during these excursions around the world. For an uncensored narrative of Neruda's complex personal life, I am grateful for Adam Feinstein's biography, *Pablo Neruda: A Passion for Life*. During his time abroad, Neruda was not only protecting himself from political oppression, but he was also hiding an

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[41] "Pablo Neruda," The Poetry Foundation, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/pablo-neruda.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.

intense, long-term love affair. Feinstein describes this time in Neruda's life as "a remarkable double life, a juggling act conducted by Neruda between two women, all the way across Europe."[45]

Matilde Urrutia (1912 – 1985), a Chilean singer and actress, had a brief love affair with Neruda in 1946 in Santiago, Chile. They reconnected three years later in Mexico City when Matilde was 37 years old. She would now be in Neruda's life from this point forward. At this time, Pablo was married to his second wife, Delia del Carril. The poet and Matilde kept their love affair a secret until 1955. During their secret love affair, Neruda wrote *Los versos del capitán* (*The Captain's Verses*) for Matilde – "a mysterious collection of extremely erotic poems,"[46] which were published anonymously in Naples in 1952. While he still loved Delia, Matilde fulfilled Neruda's physical desires, which is the central theme of these "overtly sexual love poems to his new mistress."[47] That same year, Matilde learned that she was pregnant. An ecstatic Neruda said to her, "'In a few days' time, at full moon, I want us to get married, because we are going to have a child. We will have a party and the moon will marry us.'"[48] Their happiness soon turned to sorrow, when they learned that they lost their child, which Neruda had already named Neruda Urrutia.[49] Pablo told Matilde, "'I'm going to give you a child. It's just been born, and its name is *Las uvas y el viento (The Grapes and the Wind).*'"[50]

Pablo and Matilde carried on with their love affair, and Delia became increasingly suspicious. Neruda's friend circle was buzzing with rumors of his affair with Matilde. Delia was determined to discover whether or not the rumors were true, and finally, she found a piece of paper that Neruda had carelessly left in his jacket pocket.[51] It was a letter from Matilde to Neruda, telling him that she was

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[45] Feinstein, 261.
[46] Ibid., 262.
[47] Ibid., 263.
[48] Ibid., 277.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid., 302.

pregnant for a third time (the first two being miscarriages).[52] It wasn't long after this discovery that Delia saw Neruda for the last time, and left Chile for Buenos Aires.

Neruda, separated from Delia, moved in with Matilde, but was distraught over his marriage break-up, and did not write much poetry for the rest of 1955.[53] It was in the spring of 1957 that Pablo began writing *Cien sonetos de amor*. These *100 Love Sonnets* were completed in December of 1959, dedicated to his beloved Matilde. The sonnets are divided into four parts: *Mañana/Morning, Mediodía/Afternoon, Tarde/Evening,* and *Noche/Night.* The first two poems of the *Neruda Songs* are found in the Morning section, the third in Afternoon, and the final two in the Night section of the book. The first and third poems of the *Songs of Love and Sorrow* are found in the Afternoon section, the second in Morning, number four in Evening, and the final in Night.

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 304.

The Love Sonnets of Pablo Neruda

Stephen Tapscott, published translator of Neruda's 100 Love Sonnets, describes the poems as "earthy, devout, political, adult…they represent Neruda's attempt to incorporate this affectionate, earthy, daily surrealist-and-political vision in a 'classical' body, that of a sonnet."[54] The sonnet, which originated in Italy in the 16th century, is a 14-line poem with varied rhyme scheme. Literally translated as "little song," "the sonnet traditionally reflects upon a single sentiment, with a clarification or 'turn' of thought in its concluding lines."[55] It has been associated with the feelings of love since the Middle Ages. "Short, intense, concentrated, a sonnet can be crystalline and gemlike."[56] Neruda wrote his sonnets in the style of the *Petrarchan sonnet*, whose definition is found in the glossary of the Poetry Foundation: "[The *Petrarchan sonnet*] divides the 14 lines into two sections: an eight-line stanza (octave) rhyming ABBAABBA, and a six-line stanza (sestet) rhyming CDCDCD or CDEEDE."[57] Tapscott notes that Neruda plays with the "pivot between the octet and the sextet" in his 100 Love Sonnets.

In his dedication to Matilde, Neruda writes, "I suffered while I was writing these misnamed 'sonnets'; they hurt me and caused me grief, but the happiness I feel offering them to you is vast as a savanna."[58] "Misnamed" sonnets? As we now know, the Petrarchan sonnet maintains strict rhyme scheme. Neruda's 100 sonnets, however, do not conform to the Petrarchan "rules;" we never find a consistent rhyme pattern. He goes on,

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[54] Pablo Neruda, *100 Love Sonnets/Cien sonetos de amor*, trans. Stephen Tapscott (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), vii.
[55] "Glossary Terms," The Poetry Foundation, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/glossary-term/sonnet.
[56] Manuel Durán and Margery Safir, *Earth Tones: The Poetry of Pablo Neruda*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 25.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Pablo Neruda, *100 Love Sonnets/Cien sonetos de amor*.

> I made these sonnets out of wood; I gave them the sound of that opaque pure substance, and that is how they should reach your ears…I built up these lumber piles of love, and with fourteen boards each I built little houses, so that your eyes, which I adore and sing to, might live in them…I surrender this century to you: wooden sonnets that rise only because you gave them life.[59]

The "boards" are the fourteen lines of each poem, and the "little houses" are the individual words. Neruda's passion and admiration for Matilde are palpable, simply from reading his dedication to her, which precedes the sonnets themselves.

The setting for several of the poems in this volume is the Isla Negra, Neruda's "huge frame house facing the ocean, the beach, the dunes, the sky lit by the Southern Cross."[60] The sonnets' characters are Neruda and Matilde, along with "the things that make up his life with her…the salty smell of the sea, the wind over the dunes, the poet's memories…the beach with its white sand and pebbles, the night pregnant with stars." Neruda was so overwhelmed by his love for Matilde, that he uses nature as an extension of his love for her, and "fuses these sonnets with his other loves: the sea and the wind, the delicate hues of the wild flowers that grow near the dunes, animals, and inanimate objects."[61]

Through my research, I discovered that the most present themes and imagery in the ten sonnets set by Lieberson are found in a separate poem by Neruda, written to Matilde. The following poem is from his book, *Estravagario,* and is entitled "Pido silencio" (I Need Silence):

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[59] Ibid.
[60] Durán and Safir, 24.
[61] Ibid.

I want just five things.
One is love without end.
The second is to see the autumn.
I can't live without leaves
Flying off and falling back to earth.
The third is the seriousness of winter,
the rain I loved, the caress
of the fire in the wild cold.
In fourth place comes summer
As round as a watermelon.
The fifth are your eyes,
My beloved Matilde.
I do not want to sleep without your eyes,
I don't want to live without you looking at me.
I'd give up spring
To be sure you were looking at me.
Friends, that's all I want.
It is virtually nothing and practically everything…[62]

These "five things:" love, autumn, winter, summer (the sun, the sea), and Matilde's eyes are central images found in the ten sonnets of Lieberson's two song cycles. Within these five things, Neruda also celebrates the elements: earth, fire, water, and wind. This is where we begin to unpredictably find connections between Neruda's sonnets and Buddhism. As we've learned, Lieberson was a devout Buddhist, and dedicated much of his life to learning and teaching the ways of the Buddha. With some basic knowledge of Buddhist beliefs, it is no wonder that Peter felt an immediate connection to Neruda's sonnets. In an address in New Delhi, India, the Dalai Lama spoke of a Buddhist concept of nature, "…there is a very close interdependence or interrelationship between the environment and the inhabitants…whether it is the environment that is inhabited, or the inhabitants, both of them are composed of four or five basic elements. These elements are earth, wind, fire, water and vacuum, that is space…"[63] We find, especially in the *Evening* and *Night* sections of the sonnets, the recurring theme of death and impermanence, and the acceptance of loss. "Buddhist teachings encourage awareness of the fact

[62] Feinstein, 314.
[63] The Dalai Lama, "A Buddhist Concept of Nature," *Transcript of an address on February 4, 1992 at New Delhi, India*, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.dalailama.com/messages/environment/buddhist-concept-of-nature.

that we could die at any moment. This helps us to maintain awareness of the preciousness of life and encourages us to sort out our priorities."[64]

Below is a full list of images and themes found in the sonnets, many of which are found in Neruda's "Pido silencio," and are in accordance with Buddhist beliefs:

Comparing women's sexuality to nature

Impermanence and Death

The Seasons (autumn and winter)

The elements (fire, water, wind/air, earth)

The sky (sun, moon, stars)

Dreams and sleep

Night

Light, darkness, and shadows

Love knowing no end

In the following pages, we will unpack each sonnet found in the *Neruda Songs*, followed by a detailed analysis of each song. We will then continue with a comparison of the poetry and musical language of the *Neruda Songs* with the *Songs of Love and Sorrow*.

[64] Judith Johnson, "Tibetan Buddhist Teachings on Death and Impermanence," Huffpost Healthy Living, May 20, 2014, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/judith-johnson/tibetan-buddhist-teaching_b_5353998.html.

Chapter 3: THE WORDS AND MUSIC OF THE *NERUDA SONGS*

1. "Si no fuera porque tus ojos tienen color de luna" / "If your eyes were not the color of the moon"[65]

Lieberson describes this poem as "pure appreciation of the beloved."[66] One of the most striking characteristics of this sonnet is the fact that it is comprised of only two complete sentences. The first sentence does not end until the ninth line of the poem, which gives us a feeling of anticipation and suspension of time. It is also a converse list sonnet, composed in the "if-then" format.[67] In the first eight lines of the sonnet, we find imagery comparing Matilde's physical characteristics to nature – the moon, fire, the air, amber and yellow, autumn, the sky – all of which are recurring images throughout the song cycle. Neruda opens the poem referencing Matilde's eyes, his favorite feature of his beloved. We know from his poem "Pido silencio" that Neruda adored autumn, and he uses a decorative play on color to reveal the autumn imagery in the second stanza of the poem: "if you were not an amber week, if it weren't that you are the yellow moment in which autumn climbs up through the vines." We also find references to nature's elements in this first sonnet, which are a reflection of Lieberson's Buddhist beliefs. Earth and fire: "de día con arcilla, con trabajo, con fuego,"[68] (a day with clay, with work, with fire[69]), wind: "la agilidad del aire,"[70] (air's agility), and water: "En tu abrazo yo abrazo lo que existe, la arena, el tiempo, el árbol de la lluvia,"[71] (In your embrace I embrace what exists, sand, time, the tree of the rain). In this sonnet, Neruda is celebrating both his love for Matilde as well as his love of nature, "y todo vive para

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[65] Due to copyright laws, I am unable to include the complete text of Neruda's poetry in this document. I recommend reading my document accompanied by a copy of the poems and translations.
[66] Peter Lieberson, *Neruda Songs*, (New York: Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011), 3.
[67] Bethany Stiles, "Only Changing Lands and Changing Lips: Life and Love in Peter Lieberson's *Neruda Songs* (DMA Thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014).
[68] Neruda, 20.
[69] While I used Stephen Tapscott's published translation of Neruda's sonnets as a guide, I made edits with the assistance of Kimberly Carballo, Javier Léon, director of the Latin American Music Center at Indiana University, and a Spanish-English dictionary. I made this decision in order to procure a translation that most accurately represented the Spanish poetry.
[70] Neruda, 20.
[71] Ibid.

que yo viva: sin ir tan lejos puedo verlo todo: veo en tu vida todo lo viviente"[72] (and everything lives so that I may live: without going very far I can see everything: in your life I see everything that lives).

The opening song begins with sparse accompaniment, featuring bass pizzicato and harp, followed by cello, bass clarinet, and Bb clarinet solo. Flute and piccolo solos enter in the second half of measure two with an idyllic triplet motive (Example 1). Lieberson's use of the entire range of the orchestra in this minimal introduction evokes a sense of mystery and anticipation for a newfound love. The voice enters in measure four, in an easy middle range, allowing the singer to communicate Neruda's text with a speech-like quality, creating a profound sense of intimacy (Ex. 2). The singer should be aware of the imagery of the first two lines of poetry, and Lieberson's profound text painting. The vocal line opens with a lyric, legato line painting the picture of the moon, followed by a lower, chromatic, earthy quality depicting the "day with clay." The first nine measures have a recitative-like feel to them, due to varying tempo markings and abrupt meter changes. We then find at m. 10, Lieberson's marking: intensifying (to m. 14), which includes the text "con fuego, y a prisionada tienes la agilidad del aire"[73] (with fire, and you have, trapped, air's agility), and on the word "aire," we have the highest note heard by the mezzo up until this point (fourth line D), with an unusual chord consisting of an Ab augmented triad with a G major triad stacked on top in the strings and harp,[74] and a cascading line in the solo clarinet comprised of thirty-second notes, representing the "airs agility" (Ex. 3). Here we observe a profound example of Lieberson's stunning text painting throughout the cycle.

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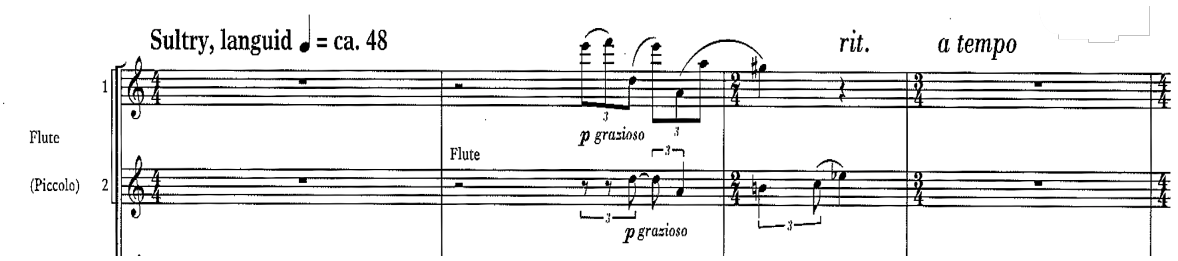
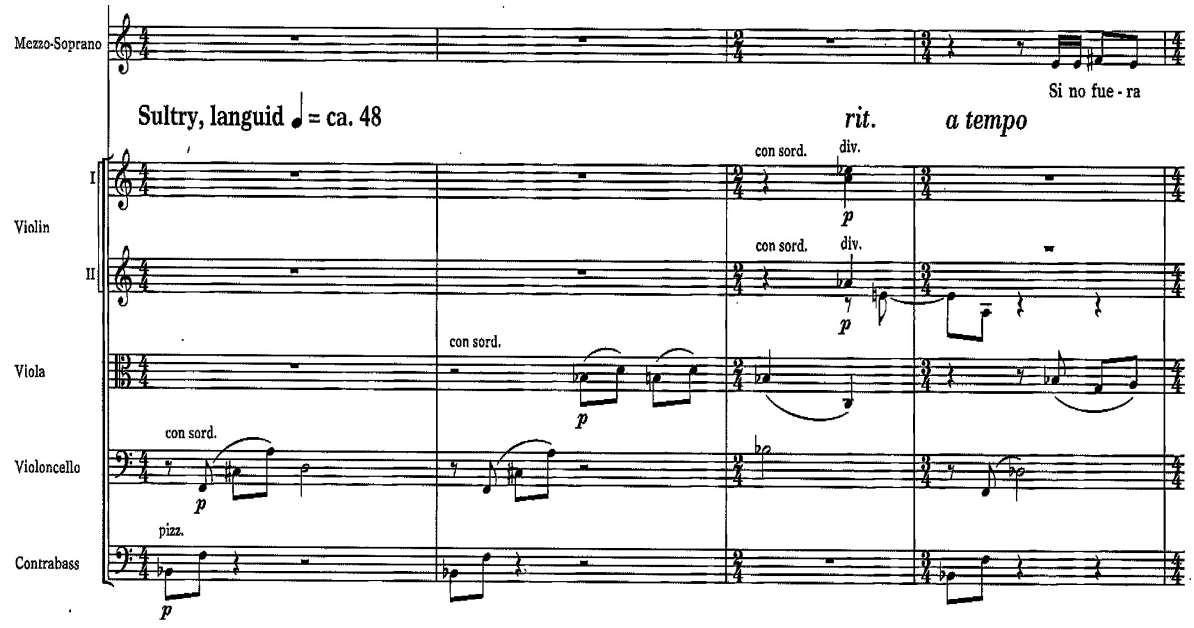
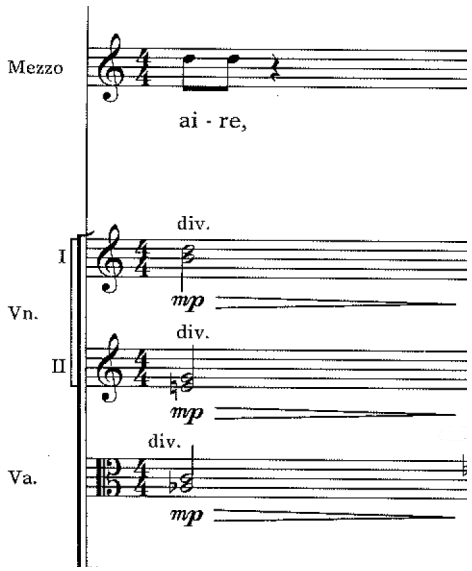
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Here we have an example of Stravinsky's influence on Peter Lieberson's compositional style. This chord is reminiscent of Stranvinsky's named chords, because if its combination of two harmonies. Stravinsky's *Petruschka* chord, for example, is a C major triad combined with an F♯ major triad, and his *Rite of Spring* chord consists of an E major triad combined with an Eb dominant seventh. I am grateful for the guidance of friend and colleague, Mark Chilla, who brought this discovery to light for me.



Example 1: "Si no fuera," *Neruda Songs*, opening flute motive (mm. 1 – 4) © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



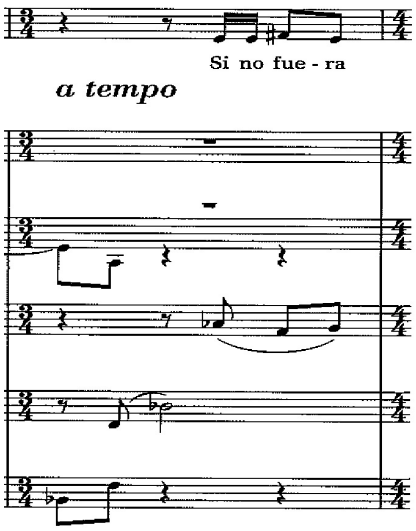
Example 2: "Si no fuera," *Neruda Songs*, opening strings and vocal entrance (mm. 1 – 4) © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 3: "Si no fuera," ***Neruda Songs*****, "Stravinsky-like" chord in strings m. 14** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

What follows is the return of the bass opening motive, and the singer's "si no fuera" motive. Lieberson stretches the word "semana," (week) with a *poco ritard* and a triplet figure, suggesting sentiments of the long, autumn week ("si no fuera porque eres una semana de ambar"/if you were not an amber week). The singer should caress the C♯ of "semana," and take care to sing an even triplet, which will create a natural ritard. Lieberson has written long rests interrupting the poetic line for the voice in this first movement, complementing the sense of suspense that Neruda has given us through his text. In m. 19, the text "si no fuera" returns, but the motive has been inverted, and the rhythm changes to triplet figures, evoking a feeling of change (Ex. 4). The energy intensifies and drives us forward, into the "Dancing" section at m. 23.

A.



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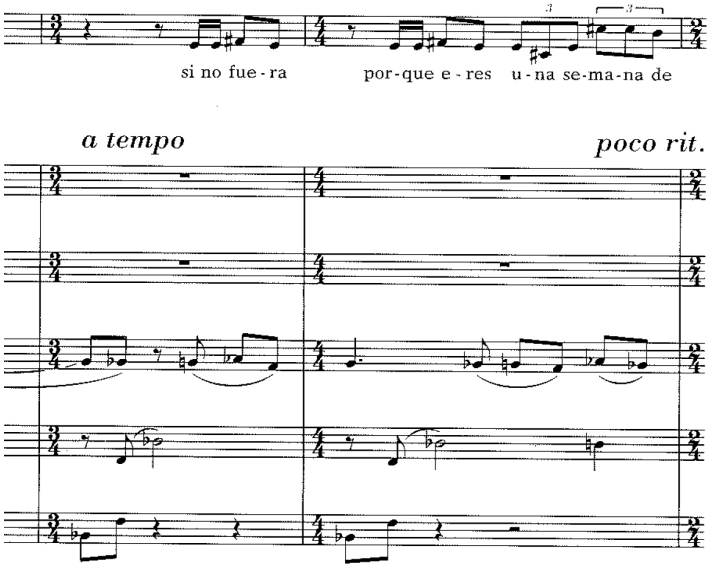
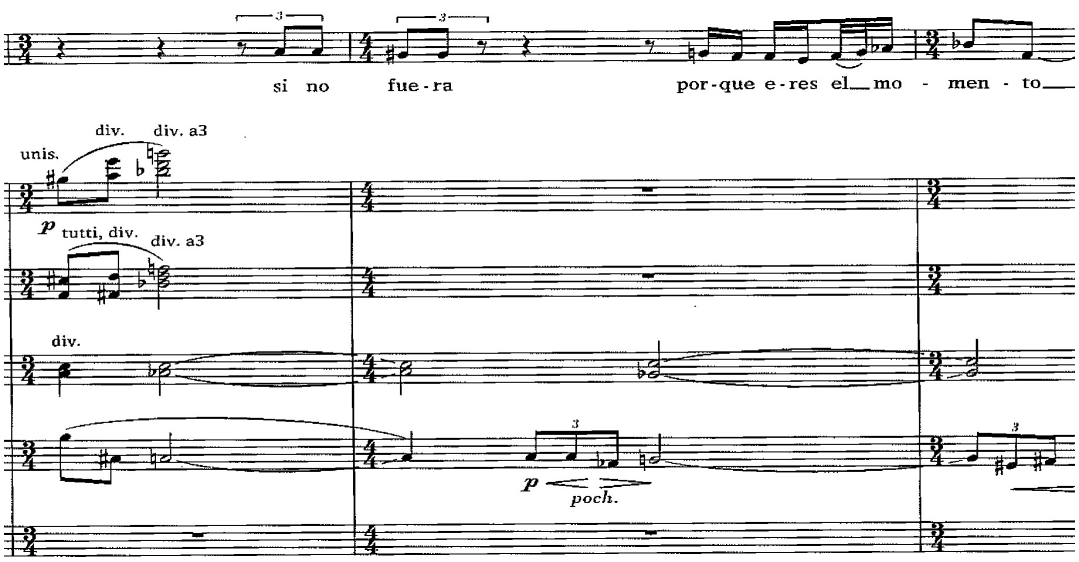
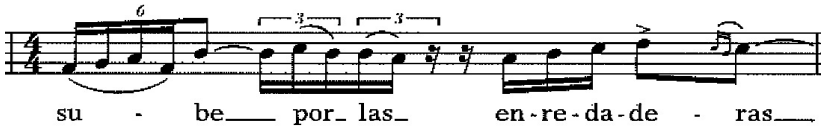


C.



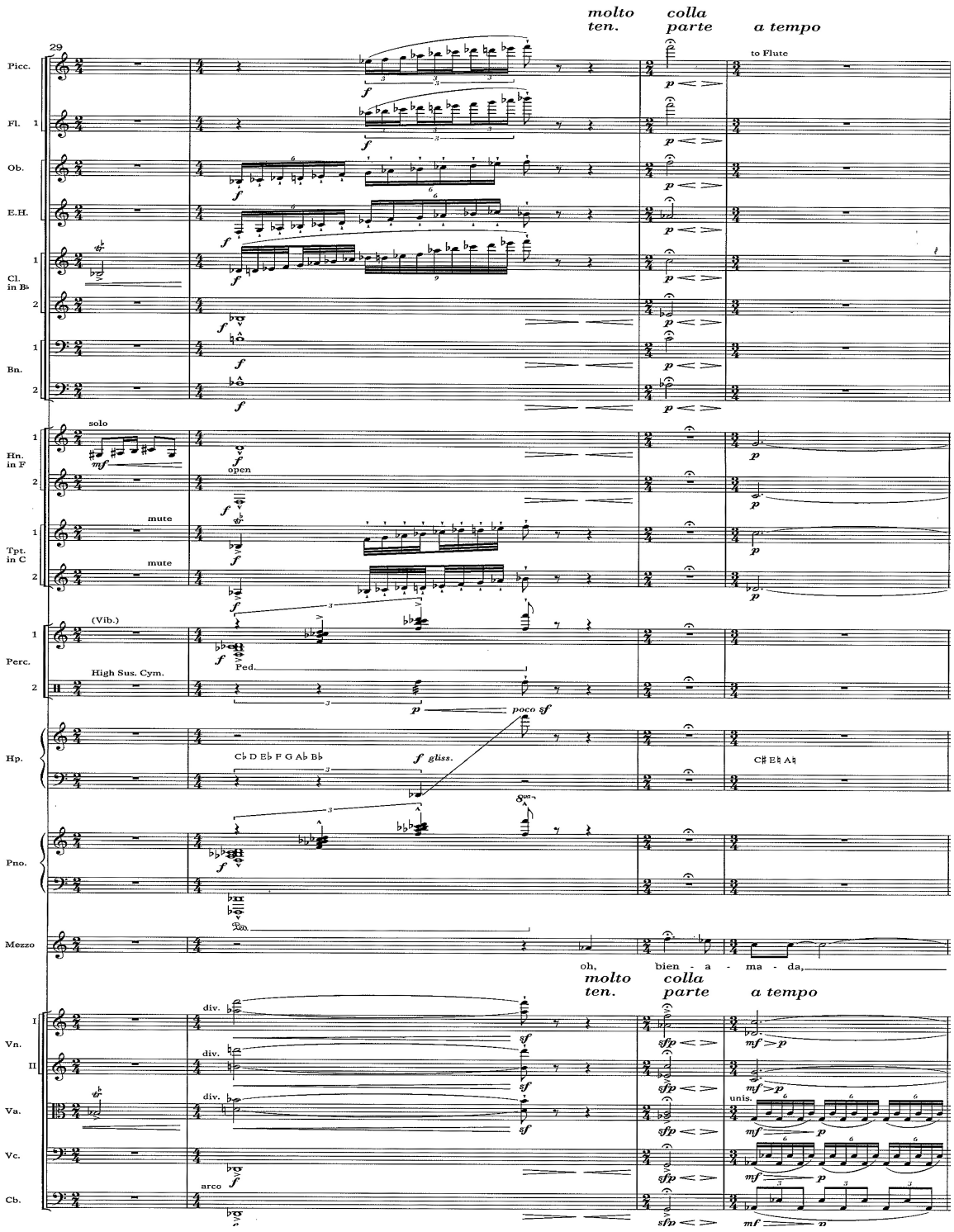
Example 4: "Si no fuera," *Neruda Songs*, "Si no fuera" vocal motives, A: m. 4; B: mm. 16 – 17, C: mm. 19 – 21 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

Doubled by the clarinet, the vocal line has an ascending melismatic motive on the word "sube" (climbs) in m. 24, reflecting beautifully the meaning of the text: "sube por las enredaderas"[75] (climbs up through the vines) (Ex. 5). We then have a huge, lush swell in the orchestra, which carries the vocal line into the triumphant "Oh, bienamada,"[76] (oh, beloved) marked *forte*, climaxing on a high F, which is a brilliant, shimmery note for the mezzo-soprano voice (Ex. 6). This is the most expansive, passionate moment of this movement: the lover calling for the beloved. Following the decay of the passionate swell comes the poignant line, "yo no te amaría!"[77] (I could not love you so!), which connects the entirety of the first nine lines of the sonnet, finally concluding the first sentence. The mezzo voice is exposed on the first line, "en tu abrazo…"[78] (in your embrace) and the ascent increases the emotional intensity. The contour then descends in the next phrase, ending with "de la lluvia"[79] (of the rain) depicting single drops of rain (Ex. 7).

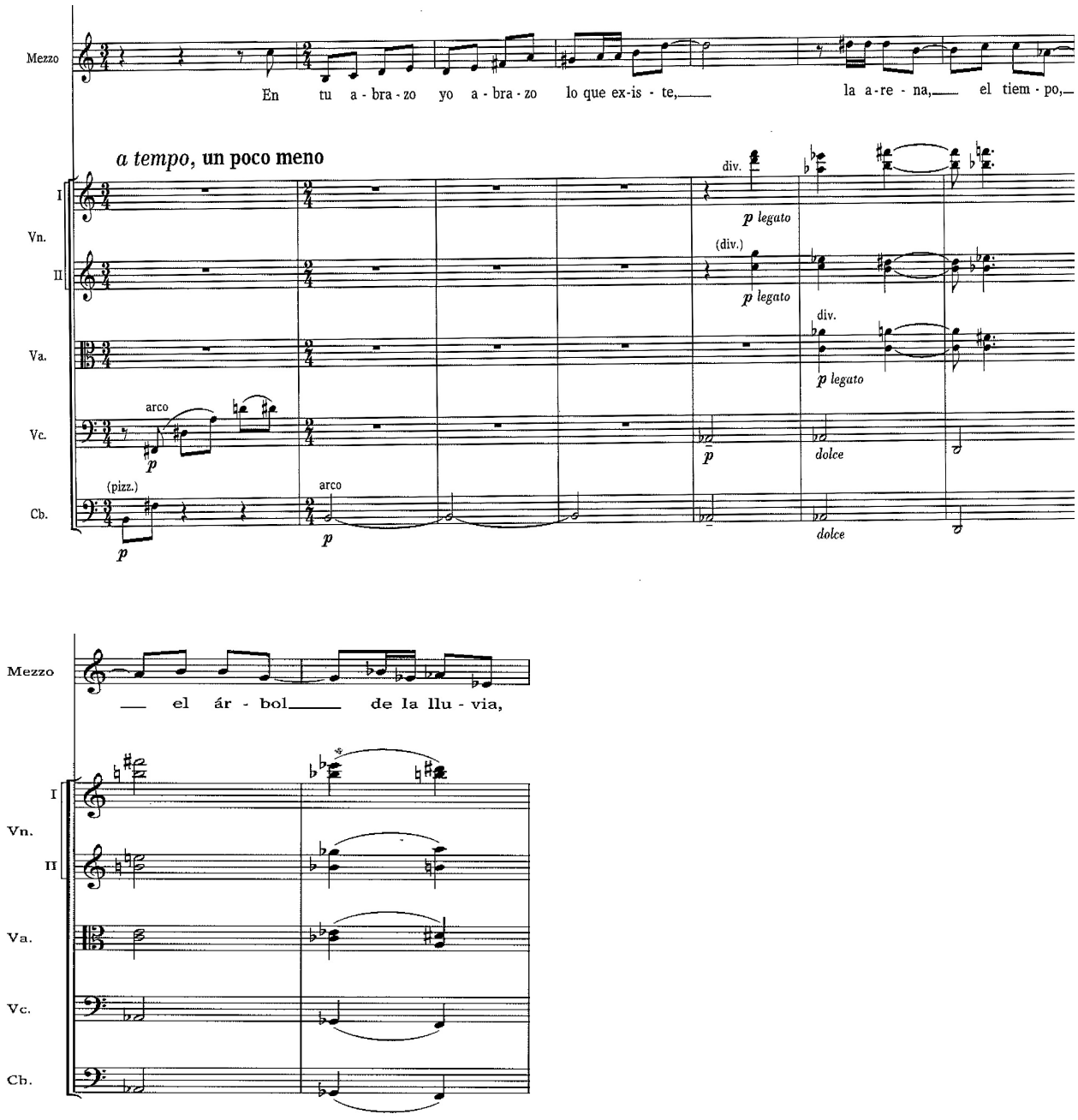


Example 5: "Si no fuera," *Neruda Songs*, "Sube" melismatic passage, m. 24 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

[75] Neruda, 20.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.

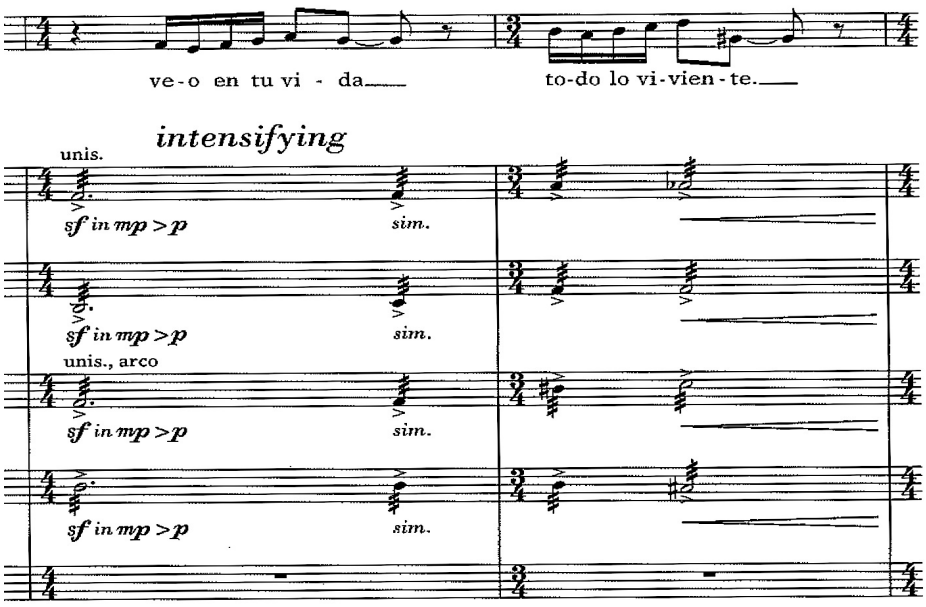


Example 6: "Si no fuera," *Neruda Songs*, "Oh bienamada" passage, mm. 29 – 32 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 7: "Si no fuera," *Neruda Songs*, Observation of vocal contour and raindrops of "de la lluvia," 37 – 44 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

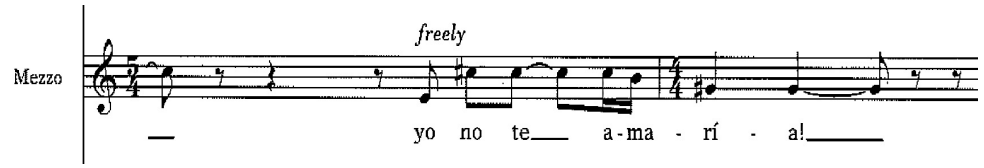
This brings us to the final section of the song, and the final stanza of the poem: "Y todo vive para que yo viva:…"[80] (and everything lives so that I may live…). Lieberson has marked this section "Dancing," reflecting the celebratory nature of the poem's conclusion. The singer should make liberal use of the *portamento* on the descending "viva" passages, increasing the passion and intensity. An abrupt change comes in m. 56 ("veo en tu vida"[81]/I see in your life), marked "intensifying," with only strings playing sustained tremolo (Ex. 8). To close the first song, Lieberson has chosen to reprise the text, "Oh bienamada, yo no te amaría!,"[82] this time marked *piano* on the high F, followed by the solo clarinet playing the first "yo no te amaría" motive, with the vocal line then answering with the second "you no te" motive, accompanied by the harp (Ex. 10). In Example 9, I have included the earlier vocal line "yo no te amaría," in order to draw a clear comparison with the clarinet's solo in mm. 62 – 63.



Example 8: "Si no fuera," *Neruda Songs*, "Veo en tu vida" mm. 56 – 57 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.

A:



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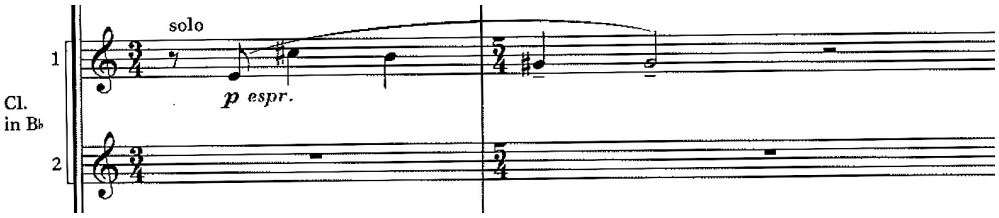
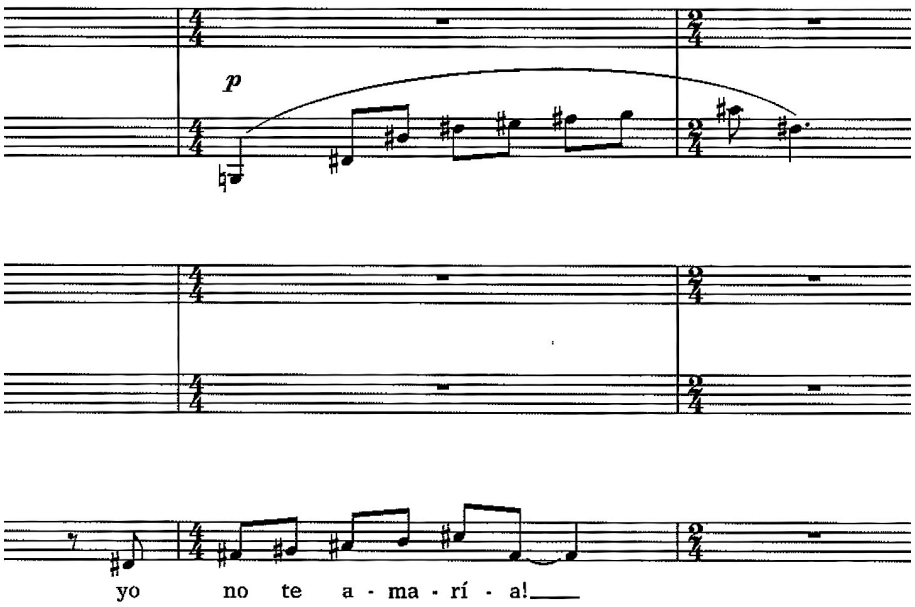


Example 9: "Si no fuera," *Neruda Songs*, "Yo no te amaría" in voice and clarinet, A: mm. 33 – 34 B: and mm. 62 – 63 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 10: "Si no fuera," *Neruda Songs*, final vocal line, accompanied only by harp, mm. 63 – 65 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

2. "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…" / "Love, love, the clouds to the tower of the sky"

Unlike "Si no fuera," "Amor, amor" does not focus directly on Matilde's characteristics specifically, but rather on love's. Neruda paints this sonnet with the color blue: the blue of the sky, the blue of fire, and the blue of the sea. Once again, we can clearly understand Lieberson's attraction to this poem. He describes this sonnet as "joyful and also mysterious in its evocation of nature's elements: fire, water, wind, and luminous space."[83] The elements are revered in the third stanza as Neruda writes of "the virtues of the wind" and the "secret of the foam." Of all the sonnets of the *Neruda Songs*, "Amor, amor" is most clearly set at Neruda's beloved Isla Negra, as he highlights his infatuation with the sea. The sonnet mysteriously concludes with "And among so many sky blues, sunken, our eyes become lost: they can barely predict the powers of the air, the underwater keys."

Lieberson has indicated a "light, brilliant" character for the second song of the cycle. Unlike the sparse, sustained opening of "Si no fuera," the shimmering accompaniment is active and rhythmic in the opening of "Amor, amor." We also have more presence in the woodwinds and brass, including the unique timbre of muted trumpets, with ascending chromatic passages, driving the excitement of a newly blossoming romance. The orchestral introduction explicitly foreshadows the opening statement of the sonnet: "Love, love, the clouds to the tower of the sky climbed up like triumphant washerwomen" (Ex. 11). The singer then enters, in "joyful" response to the instrumental introduction, singing the word "amor" four times. The repetition of "amor," ascending each time, gives a sense of breathlessness and excitement (Ex. 12). Lieberson has not indicated any dynamic markings in the opening vocal line, but a natural crescendo will occur due to the ascending motive through the primo passaggio. The singer should connect the final amor to "las nubes," in order to increase the intensity, as is heard by Ms. Lieberson in her Grammy Award-winning recording. In the preceding "amor" iterations, the mezzo should play with connecting versus detaching the repetitions.

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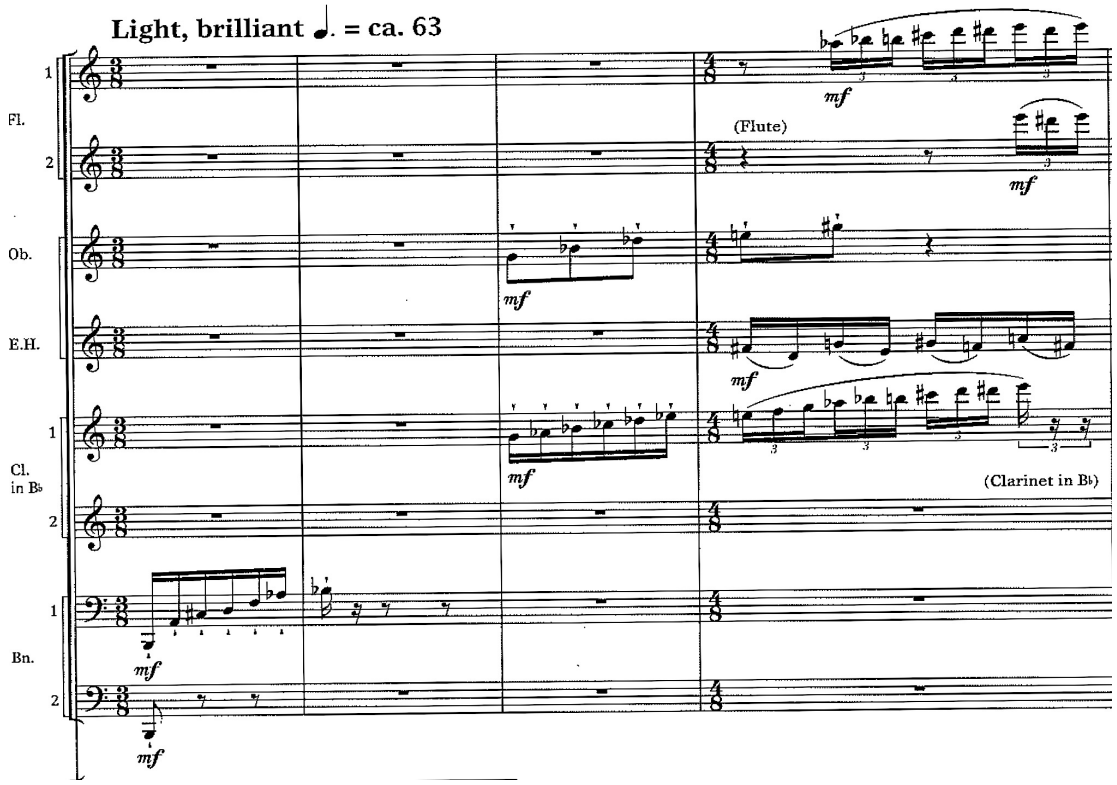
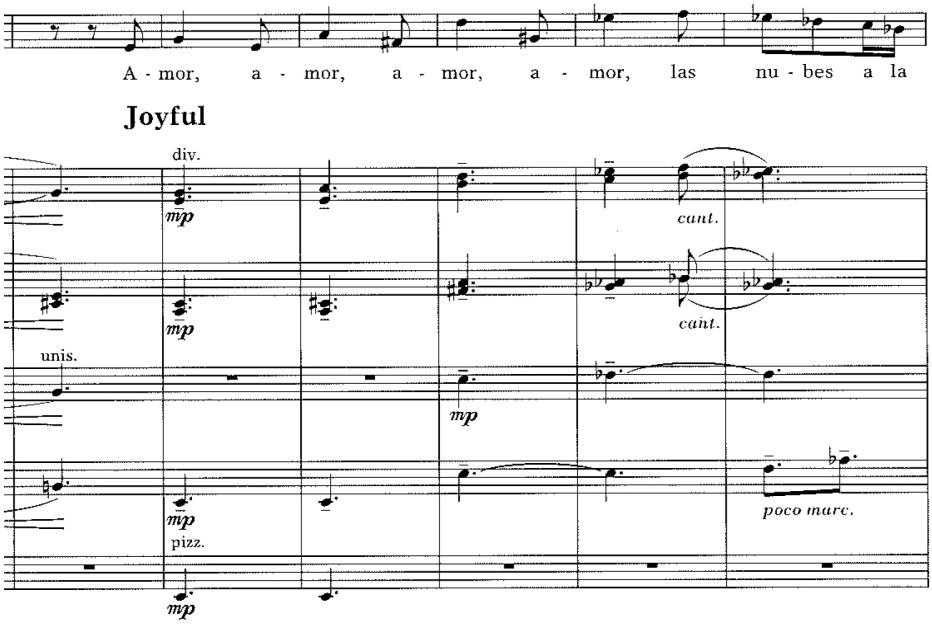
[83] Lieberson, 3.



Example 11: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, woodwind introduction, mm. 1 – 4 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

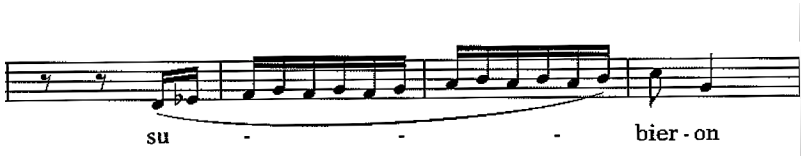


Example 12: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, first vocal entrace, mm. 12 – 17 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

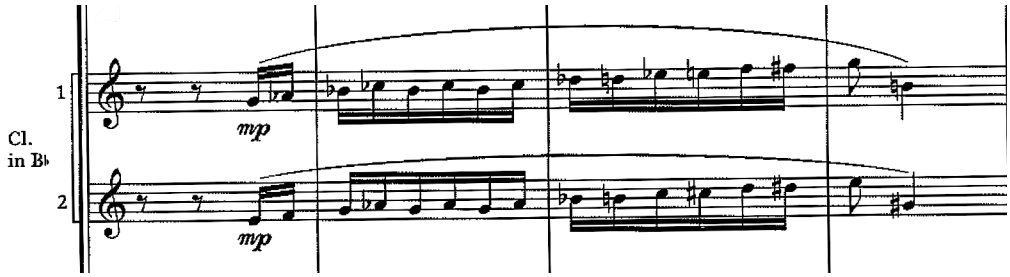
We then have a Handelian melisma in m. 23 – 26 on the word "subieron" (climbed), which is immediately imitated in the clarinets (Examples 13 – 14). This is reminiscent of the "sube" motive we heard in the first movement. Both "subieron" and "sube" are conjugations of "subir," which means in Spanish "to climb." A shorter melismatic passage follows at m. 31, on the text "como triunfantes"[84] (like triumphant), set a third higher than the first melismatic motive, driving us toward the climactic moment: "y todo ardió en azul"[85] (and everything burned in blue) (Ex. 15). The overt excitement then quickly diminishes, beginning at m. 40, leading us toward the calm, "suspended" 12/8 at m. 45., with a Gb, Ab, Db, Eb cluster chord in the piano, and an Eb in the bass. We hear the waves of the sea in the piano and strings in mm. 45 – 46, and the mezzo voice then enters in an easy middle range with the words "el mar" (the sea) (Ex. 16). The mezzo should take special care with the words "el mar," to sing with the utmost sense of endearment and delicacy, as if she has just inhaled the salty air of the sea. A rare moment of

[84] Neruda, 52.
[85] Ibid.

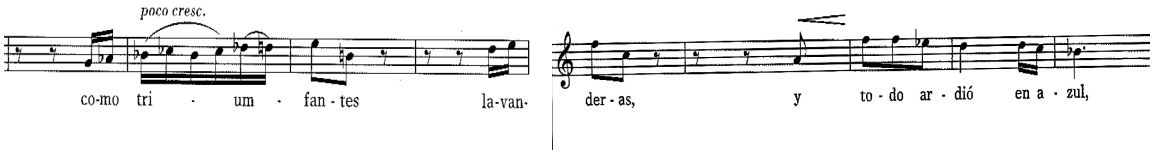
vocal doubling follows in m. 49, as the bassoon doubles the mezzo with the text "el día se desterraron juntos"[86] (the day were all exiled together). It is the singer's task to connect this entire section, from the beginning through measure 50, despite the long rests and changes in meter.



Example 13: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, "Subieron" melismatic passage, mm. 23 – 26 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

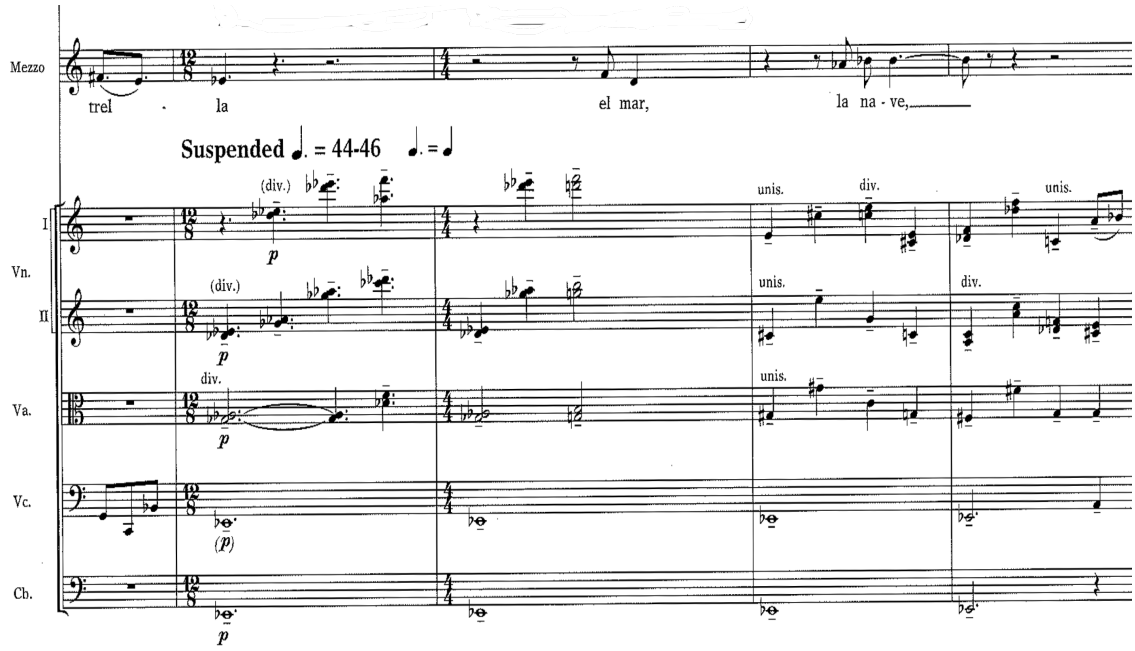


Example 14: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, Clarinet imitation of "Subieron," mm. 27 – 30 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



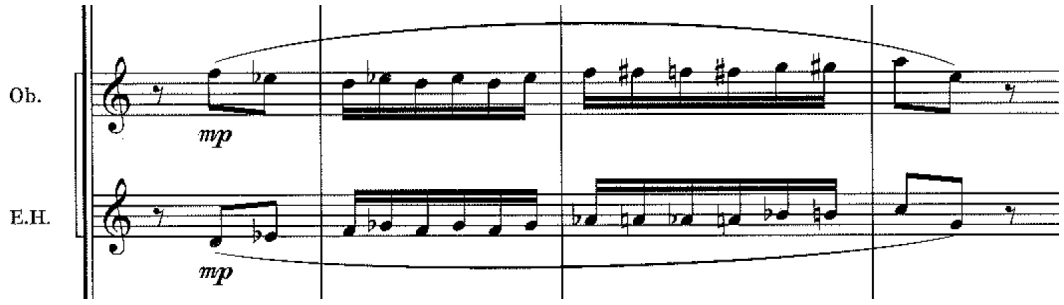
Example 15: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, "Como triumfantes…y todo ardió" passage, mm. 31 – 39 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

[86] Ibid.



Example 16: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, "El mar" entrance, mm. 45 – 46 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

We then abruptly return to tempo primo in m. 51, with exact motivic material from the opening instrumental intro, until the entrance of the bassoon in m. 51. The vocal line enters with "Ven a ver" (come see), which also utilizes motivic material from the opening "amor" motive. The difference here is that, due to Lieberson's thoughtful text setting, we do not have a pick-up. The return of our chromatic "subieron" melismatic passage is represented in the oboe and English horn (Ex. 17). The vocal line enters with new material in m. 76 with "y la clave redonda del rapido universe" (the round key to the quick universe), which is a response to the flute motive in the preceding measure (Ex. 18). We then hear the rapidity of the universe in m. 81 in the flute and clarinet, with *a tempo* sixteenth note triplets (Ex. 19).



Example 17: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, "Subieron" motive in oboe and English horn, mm. 70 – 73 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

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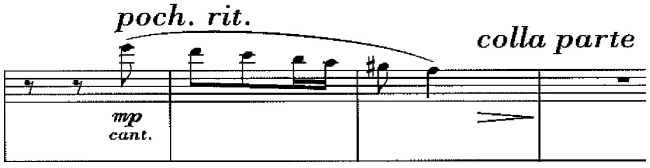

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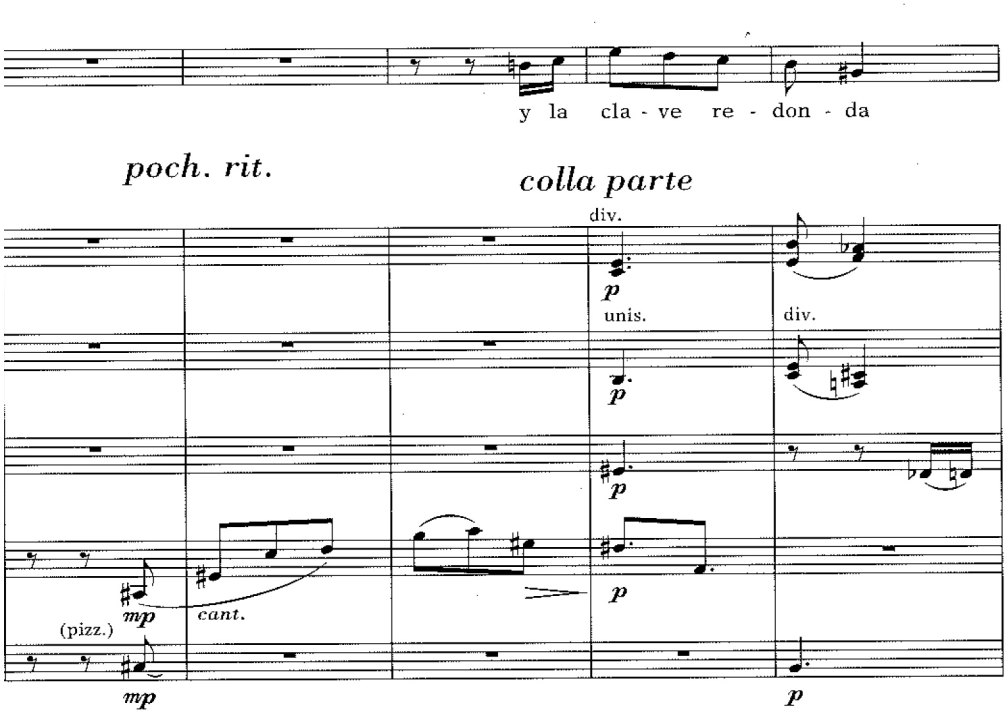
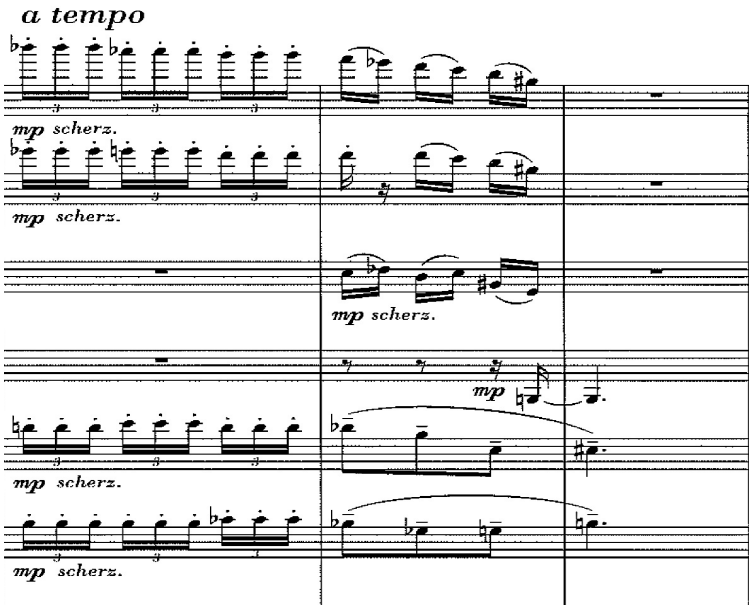


Example 18: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, Flute motive and vocal response A: mm. 73 – 75 and B: mm. 73 – 77 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

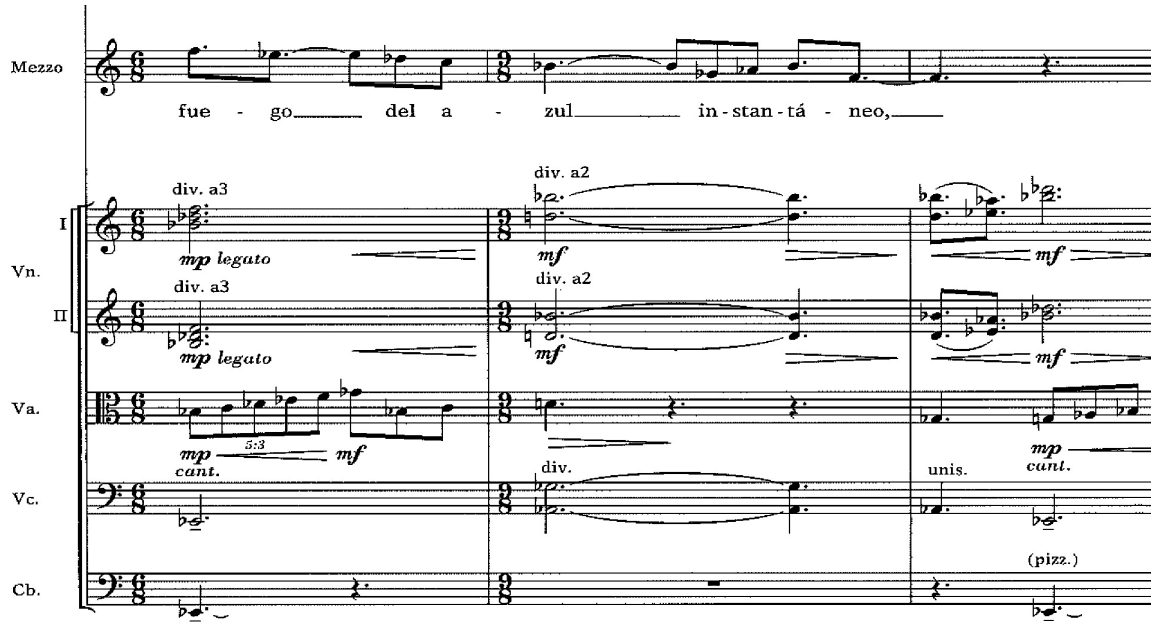


Example 19: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, The "Rapid Universe" motive in winds (flute, oboe, Clarinet 1 & 2), mm. 81 – 82 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

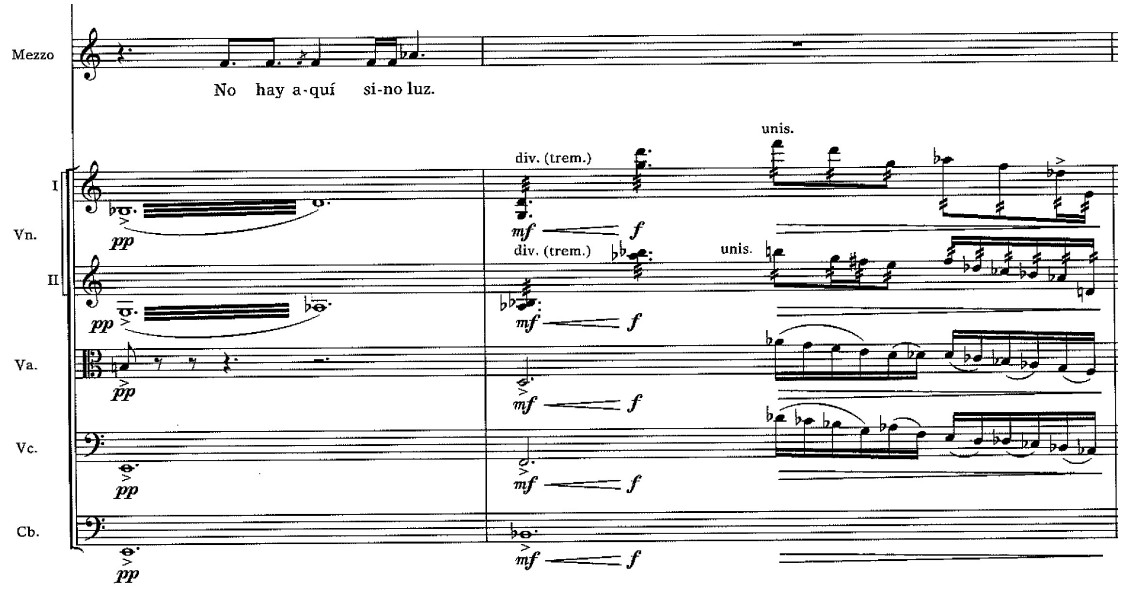
A variation of the opening vocal motive occurs in mm. 96 and 97 on the text "ven a tocar"[87] (come touch), which is to be carried over to "el fuego del azul instantaneo"[88] (the fire of the instantaneous blue) with an energetic crescendo to the end of the phrase (Ex. 20). A shimmering orchestral glissando in m. 106 introduces the poco più mosso section, followed by a descending motive by tremolo strings. The strings and clarinet then hold their tremolo, while the voice enters with the chant-like line, "no hay aquí sino luz"[89] (there is nothing here but light), followed by a repeat of the glissando and tremolo motive (Ex. 21). This line of the sonnet is in list-form, "No hay aquí sino luz, cantidades, racimos, espacio abierto por las virtudes del viento"[90] (There is nothing here but light, quantities, clusters, space opened by the virtues of wind), but Lieberson has incorporated significant pauses in the vocal line, inserting an orchestral motive for each comma, creating conversation between the voice and instruments of the orchestra. The

[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid.

singer must keep the energy alive, and the breath connected between words, in order to maintain the integrity of the text.



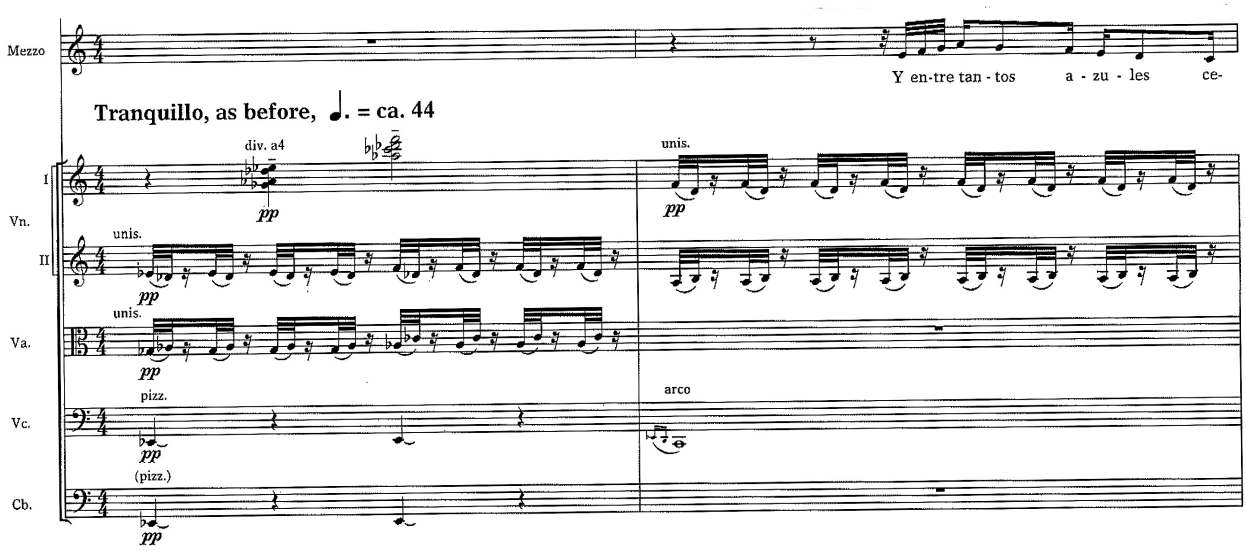
Example 20: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, "El fuego del azul," mm. 99 – 101 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



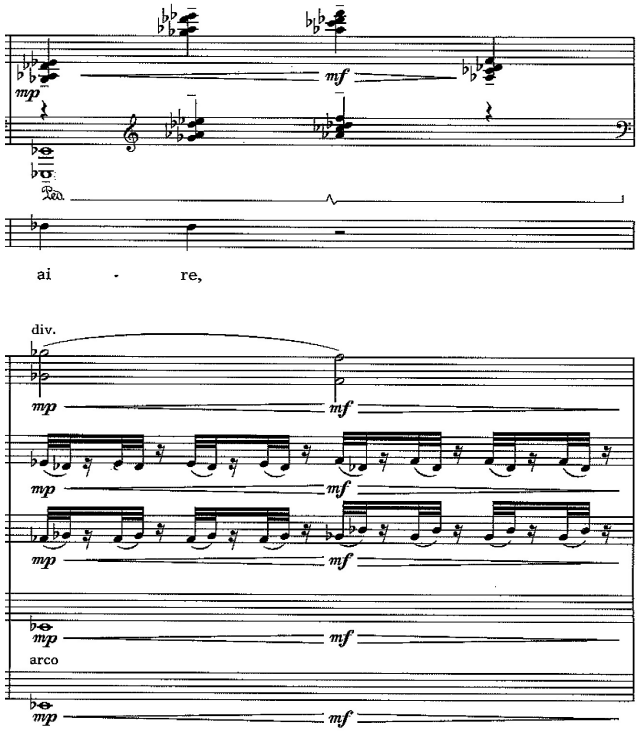
Example 21: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, "No hay aquí si no luz" and tremolo section, mm. 97 – 101 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

The *tranquillo* section, beginning at m. 129, is introduced with a 32nd note motive in the violin and viola, evoking the feeling of a heart beat (Ex. 22). The vocal line enters in m. 130, somewhat unexpectedly, emerging out of the orchestral accompaniment, with the final stanza of the sonnet, "Y entre tantos azules celestes, sumergidos"[91] (and among so many sky blues, submerged). The orchestra swells on the word "aire," (air) which is reminiscent of the "aire" section in the first movement (Ex. 23, also see Ex. 3 for comparison to the first movement). Here we have the addition of the "heart beat" motive in the strings, flute, and piccolo. The final line of the song, which is also the final line of the sonnet ("los poderes dell aire, las llaves submarinas"[92]/the powers of the air, the underwater keys) leaves us with a sense of seduction and mystery (Ex. 24). Lieberson enhances these perceptions by writing a flirtatious grace note at the beginning of the word "llaves." We then hear the rumbling of the waves in the chromatic motive in the cello and bass clarinet, while the heartbeat continues in the higher strings and winds. The movement ends with a low D♯ in the cello, and an unsettling tri-tone motive in the piano and violin (E) and oboe (A♯) (Ex. 25). This motive is heard throughout the third movement, and the tonality from the end of the second movement is carried over directly, as well.

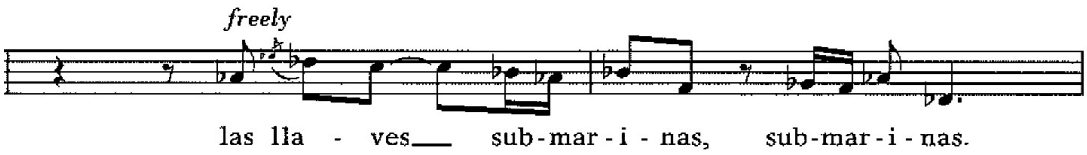
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.



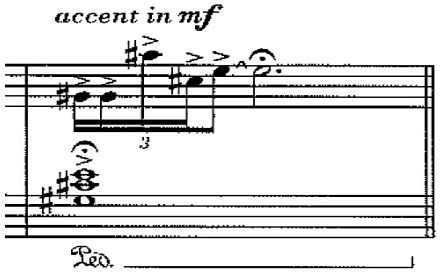
Example 22: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, Heartbeat motive in strings, mm. 129 – 130 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 23: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, "Aire" motive (piano, voice, strings), m. 134 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 24: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, "Las llaves submarinas" mm. 136 – 137 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 25: "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo…," *Neruda Songs*, Final piano motive, m. 140 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

3. "No estés lejos de mí un solo día, porque cómo…" / "Don't be far off from me, not even for a day, because how…"

"The third poem…reflects the anguish of love, the fear and pain of separation,"[93] Lieberson writes. In this centerpiece of the *Neruda Songs*, Neruda speaks directly to his beloved Matilde. This poem could very well be a reflection on the time that the two lovers were having a secret affair, and were forced to spend extended periods of time apart. In his mature works, Neruda often wrote of his own personal fear of solitude and death.[94] A question for interpretation would be: how much of this poem is truly referring to his affair with Matilde, and how much of it is about Neruda's own personal fears? While this sonnet focuses mostly on Neruda's sentiments, we do find reference to nature's elements. First, to fire, "y tal vez todo el humo que anda buscando casa venga a matar aún mi corazón perdido"[95] (and maybe all the smoke that roams looking for a home will come to kill my lost heart) and the sea, "ay que no se quebrante tu silueta en la arena"[96] (oh, may your silhouette never dissolve on the beach).

"Lonely woodwind cries"[97] introduce the center piece of the cycle. Lieberson has carried over the tonality from the conclusion of "Amor, amor," with the bass clarinet taking over the low D♯ from the piano, the oboe holding onto the A♯, and the English Horn taking the E that we last heard in the violin section. The voice emerges on beat two of m. 3, joining the strings on the Eb, tracing an Eb minor tonality (Ex. 26). The "no estés" motive in the opening of the vocal line is the central theme of this movement. Lieberson then sets the line "un solo día" three times, increasing intensity each time. The opening motive is then repeated in m. 7, this time a tri-tone lower in A minor, with slight variation in the rhythm. The motive returns in m. 10 for a third time, also in A minor, and then abruptly shifting to C♯ minor in m. 11, with an enharmonic Ab in the vocal line on the word "mí." It is in this measure that we are introduced to the recurring oboe motive, which we first heard at the end of the second movement (Ex. 27).

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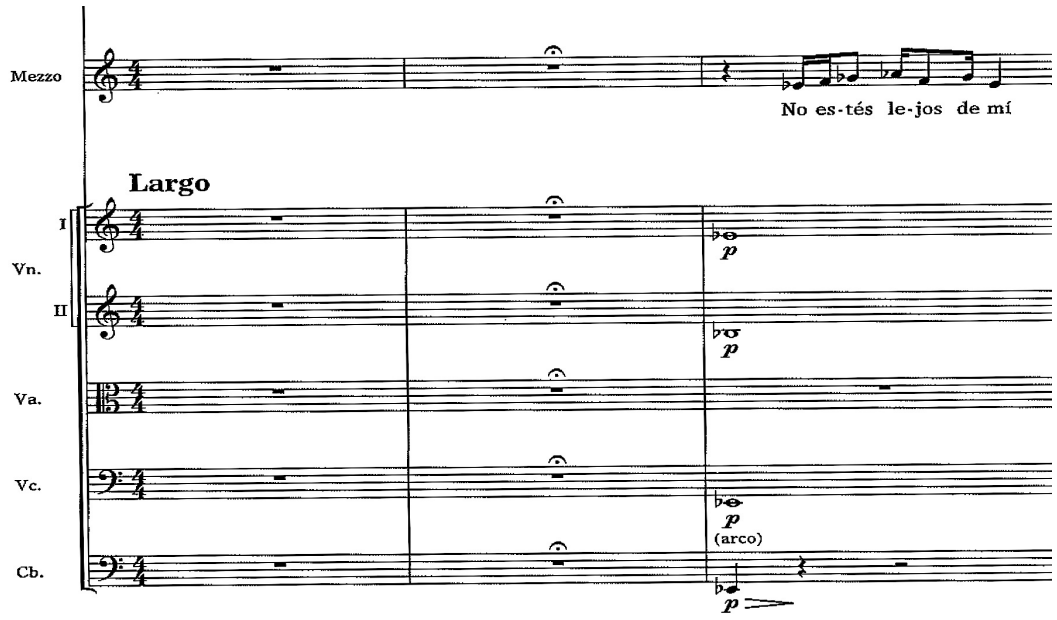
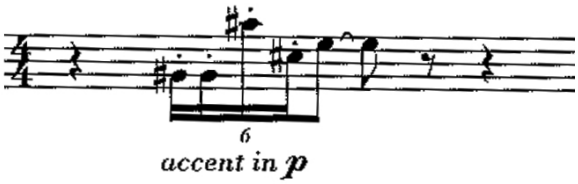
[93] Lieberson, 3.
[94] Feinstein, 399.
[95] Neruda, 96.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Deanna Hudgins, "Neruda Songs."



Example 26: "No estès lejos de mí," *Neruda Songs*, First vocal entrance, mm. 1 – 3 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

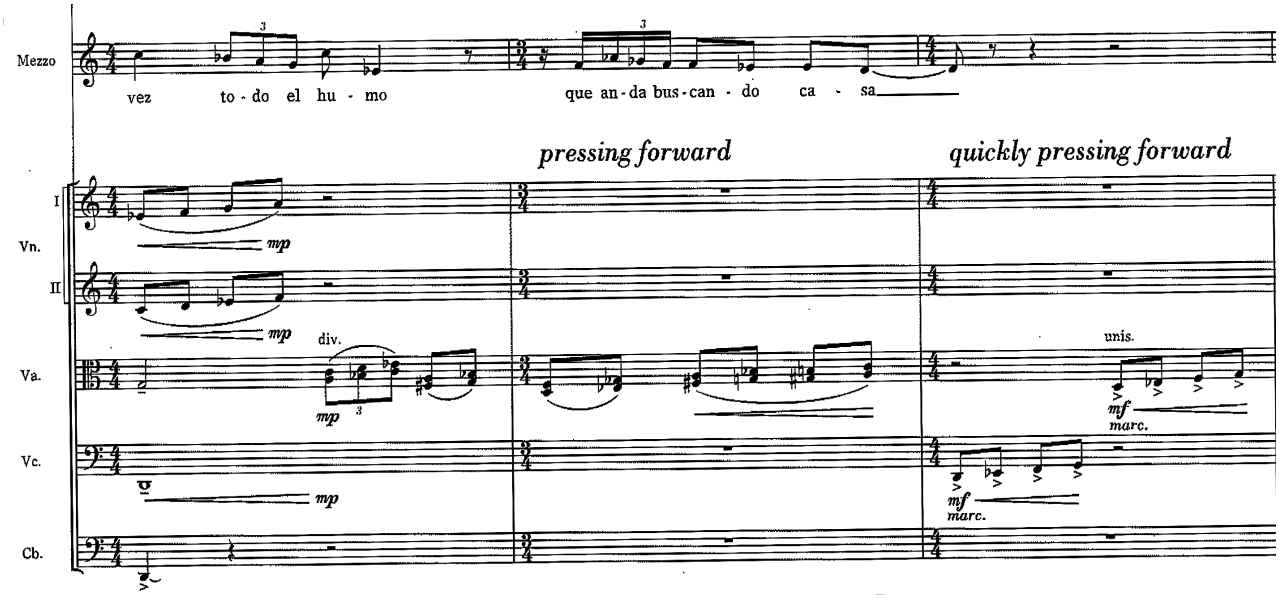


Example 27: "No estès lejos de mí," *Neruda Songs*, Oboe motive, m. 11 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

The tessitura of this song is quite low, with very little forward movement until m. 34, "que anda buscando casa"[98] (looking for a home) where Lieberson has marked "pressing forward," and then "quickly pressing forward" in m. 35 (Ex. 28). The intensity continues charging forward with three exclamations of "Venga a matar"[99] (mm. 36 – 39), with the highest tessitura we've heard thus far in this song (Ex. 29). With the text "aún mi corazón perdido"[100] (my lost heart), we are back to tempo, with the

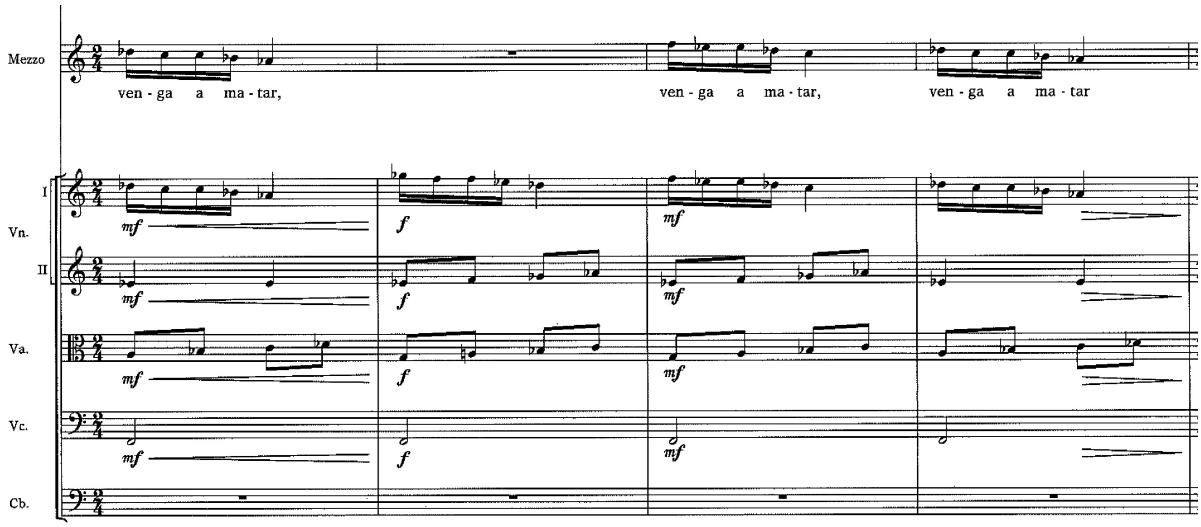
[98] Neruda, 96.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.

English horn playing the "no te vayas"[101] (do not leave me) theme (Example 30 includes both the vocal excerpt of "no te vayas" as well as the English horn imitation). Lieberson then brings back the opening text and musical motive, this time in Bb, but jumping up the octave on "un solo día," to directly mirror the opening two repetitions of "un solo día." The effect is especially moving if the singer is able to connect mm. 42 and 43 without taking a breath, singing a true *pp*, as indicated in m. 43, evoking a sense of unbridled vulnerability. Measure 44 introduces brand new material, with a *subito mf* E-natural on the exclamatory "Ay," (Oh!) supported by the violin section. The phrase "ay que no se quebrante tu silueta en la arena"[102] (oh may your silhouette never dissolve on the beach) descends for a brief moment into low voice, and then returns stepwise back up to head voice, leading into a second intense "ay" on the E, accented by the violins, followed by the text "que no vuelen tus párpados en la ausencia"[103] (may your eyelids never flutter in the absence). This time, the phrase ends on a low D♯, reining us back in for the return of the pleading "no te vayas" motive (Ex. 31).



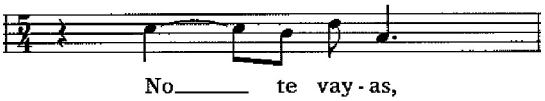
Example 28: "No estès lejos de mí," *Neruda Songs*, "Pressing forward," mm. 33 – 35 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.

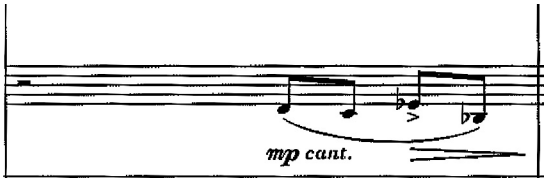


Example 29: "No estès lejos de mí," *Neruda Songs*, "Venga a matar," mm. 36 – 39 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

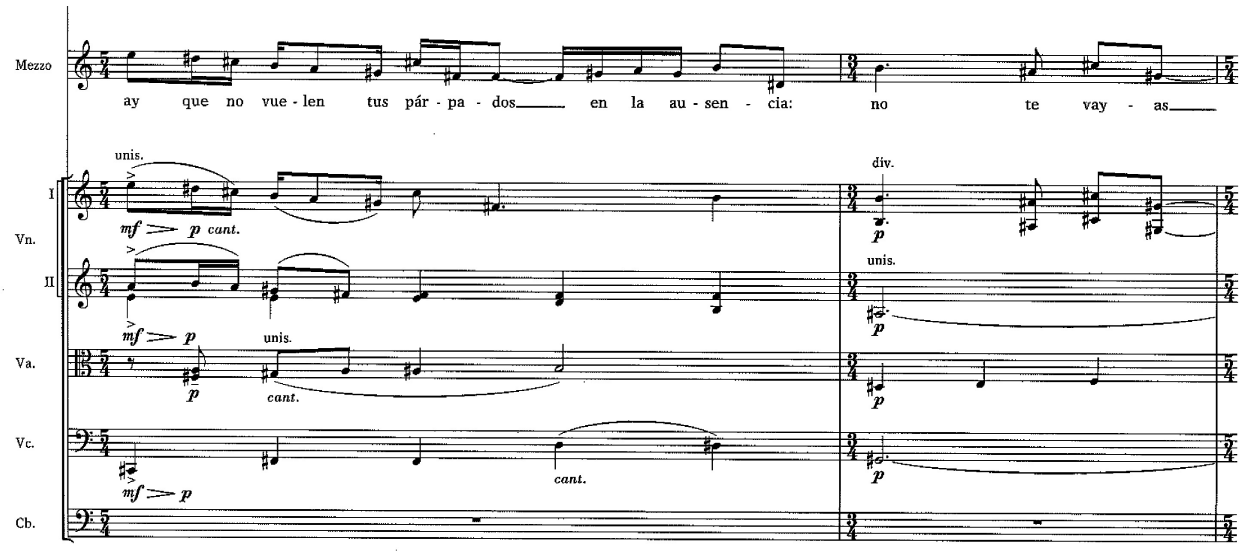
A:



B:



Example 30: "No estès lejos de mí," *Neruda Songs*, "No te vayas" motive in voice and English horn (m. 41) A: m. 21 and B: m. 41 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 31: "No estès lejos de mí," *Neruda Songs*, "Ay que no vuelen tus párpados," mm. 46 – 47

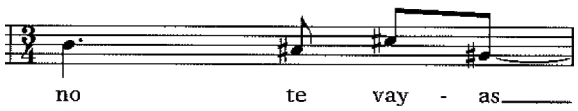
Lieberson sets a repetition of "bienamada" (my dearest) to the musical motive of "no te vayas," (don't leave me) which is profoundly significant due to the starkly contrasting meaning and feeling of the two phrases, increasing that sense of desperation and pleading (Ex. 32). As an expressive tool, the singer should be aware of the connection here, and sing "bienamada" with the same emotional intensity as "no te vayas." The piece's final eight measures are some of the most moving, poignant marriage of poetry and music in this cycle: "preguntando si volverás o si me dejarás muriendo"[104] (asking if you will return or if you will you leave me here, dying). The range of this final section is perfectly written in the speaking range of the mezzo voice. The intimacy that can be accomplished here is so profound, and something that Lieberson surely imagined Lorraine singing before she ever saw the music. The section features a conversation between the voice and solo instruments of the orchestra. Lieberson sets "muriendo" four times, each time with the final syllable descending a step, then half steps lower, with the final "muriendo"

[104] Ibid.

ending on a low A.[105] The strings play the motive of "un solo día" in response to the second "muriendo" in m. 59 (Ex. 33), and the oboe then echoes the melody of the vocal line, "yo cruzare toda la tierra preguntando" in m. 61 with a varying rhythm (Ex. 34). The last words of the mezzo voice are another reprise of the "No estés" motive in C♯ minor. We then hear the oboe motive for the last time, followed by an unsettling A♯ to B♯ in the clarinet, leaving us with a definite feeling of a question at the end of the movement (Ex. 35).

[105] While Lieberson's text setting was exceptional, especially for someone who is not fluent in Spanish, his setting of the word "muriendo" was inconsistent with his faithfulness to the language. In his setting, he has separated each syllable as follows: mu-ri-en-do (2 sixteenth notes followed by 2 eighth notes). The word, however, is pronounced mu-riendo, with a glide between the i and e, creating only 3 syllables. Therefore, I have chosen to sing this line connecting the first two sixteenth notes, and placing the "rien" on the penultimate eighth note.

A:



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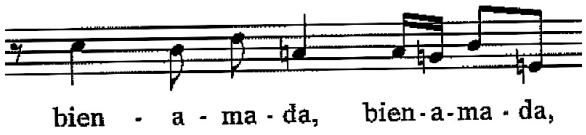
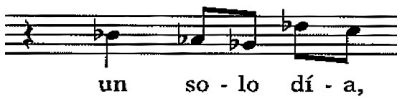
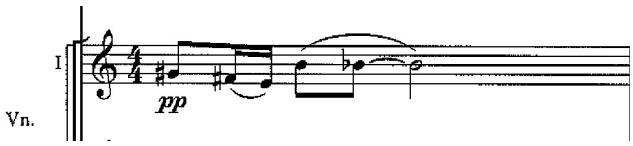


Example 32: "No estès lejos de mí," ***Neruda Songs*****, "No te vayas" and "Bienamada" comparison, A: m. 47 and B: m. 49** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

A:

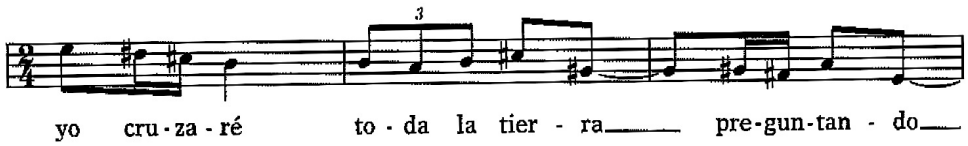


B:



Example 33: "No estès lejos de mí," ***Neruda Songs*****, "Un solo día" motive in voice and first violin A: m. 4, and B: m. 59** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

A:



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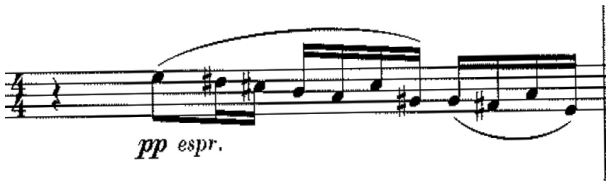
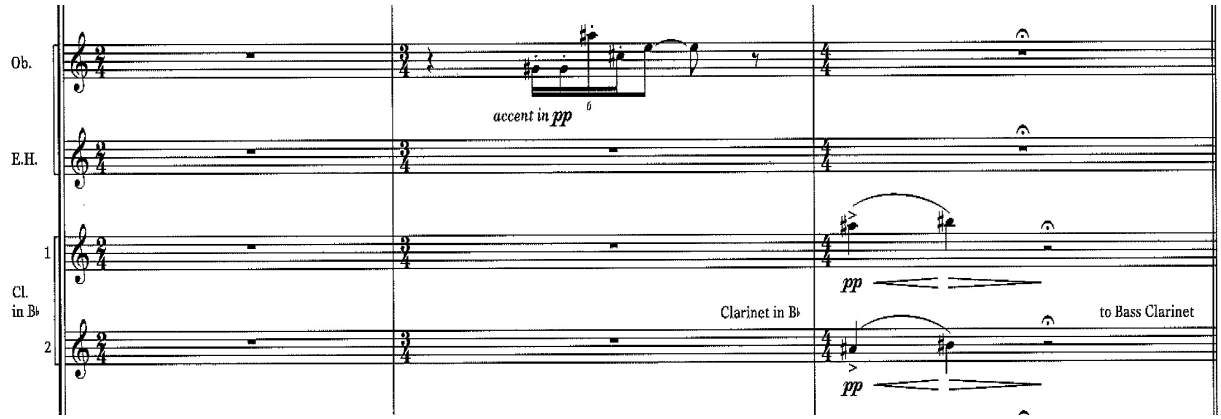


Example 34: "No estès lejos de mí," ***Neruda Songs*****, "You cruzaré" in voice and clarinet, A: mm. 53 – 55 and B: m. 61** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 35: "No estès lejos de mí," ***Neruda Songs*****, Final motive in oboe and clarinet, mm. 62 – 64** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

4. "Ya eres mía. Reposa con tu sueño en mi sueño" / "Now you are mine. Rest with your dream in my dream."

The opening line of the fourth sonnet of the *Neruda Songs* is a stark contrast to the yearning sentiment of "No estés lejos de mí." Lieberson describes this poem as "complex in its emotional tone. First there is the exultance of passion. Then, gentle, soothing words lead the beloved into the world of rest, sleep and dream."[106] Neruda often liked to play with the blurred line of reality versus fantasy and dreams in his poetry, and this sonnet is a perfect example of the surrealism used by the poet. Night is the setting of the poem, and Neruda once again weaves his adoration for nature's beauty with his love for Matilde. A reference to amber returns in this sonnet (he also wrote of amber in "Si no fuera"), but this time he uses the word as a noun, as opposed to an adjective, "y junto a mí eres pura como el ámbar dormido"[107] (and beside me you are as pure as a sleeping amber). In this case, the "sleeping amber" could have a connection with the sea.[108]

Once more, Neruda honors nature and its elements in this sonnet. Water is a central theme: "Irás, iremos juntos por las aguas del tiempo"[109] (You will go, we will go together, through the waters of time), "mientras yo sigo el agua que llevas y me lleva"[110] (While I follow the water you carry, that carries me away). Neruda also compares Matilde to the evergreen, the sun, and the moon: "solo tú, siempreviva, siempre sol, siempre luna"[111] (only you, evergreen, ever sun, ever moon). The final line of the poem recalls the feeling of presence in a lover's absence, which both Neruda and Matilde spoke of: "y ya no soy sin ti sino solo tu sueño"[112] (and without you, I am nothing more than your dream).[113] Neruda plays with the meaning of "sueño" in this sonnet. In Spanish, the word can mean sleep or dream. The singer could

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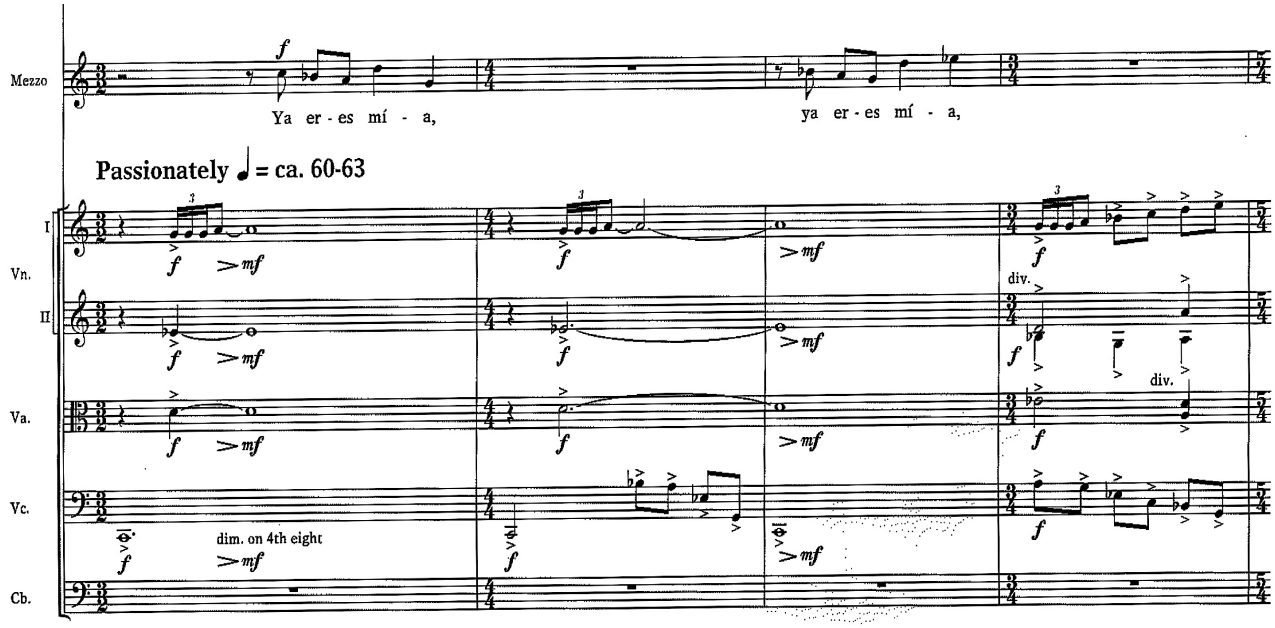
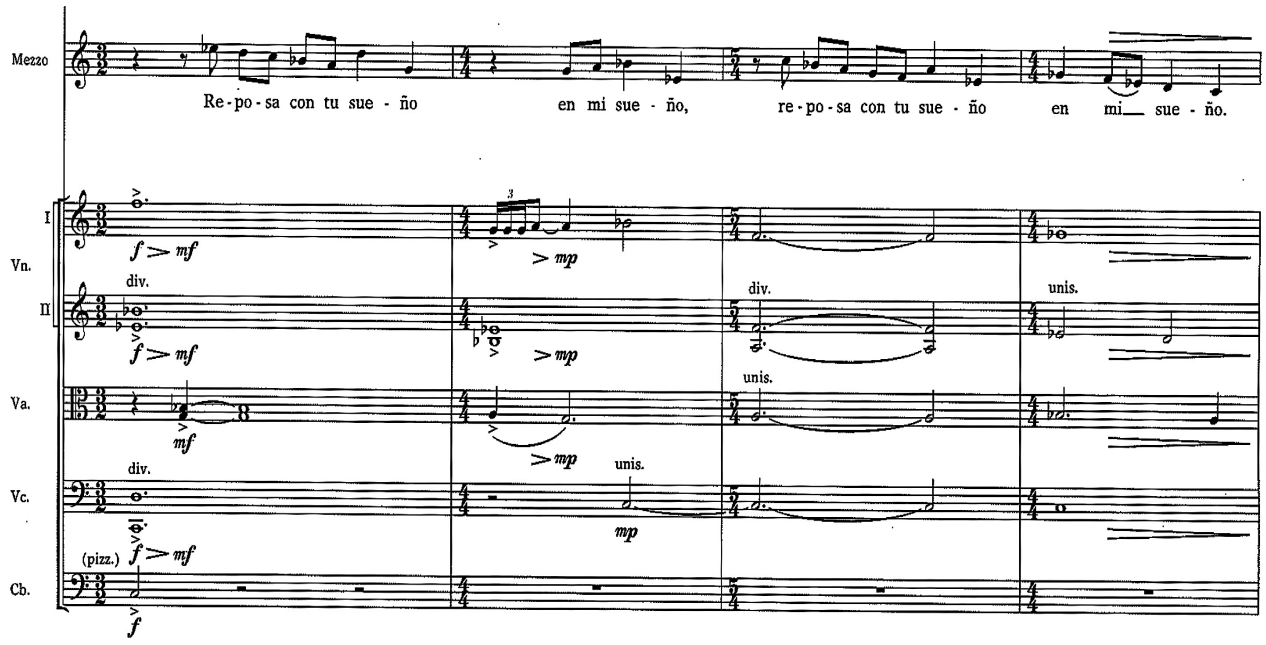
[106] Lieberson, 3.
[107] Neruda, 172.
[108] According to the Lithuanian legend of the Jurate and Kastytis, the Sea Goddess Jurate falls in love with the fisherman Kastytis. Jurate's father is furious that she has fallen in love with a mere mortal, and punishes her by destroying her amber castle in the sea, and turning her into sea foam. Legend has it that one can still find small pieces of amber from Jurate's castle on the shores of the Baltic Sea. See *Legend of Jurate and Kastytis*, accessed April 12, 2016, http://www.ambermuseum.ru/en/home/about_amber/legends/jurate_and_kastytis.
[109] Neruda, 172.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Alexandria Giardino, Preface to *My life with Pablo Neruda,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), xv.

interpret the word's meaning in different ways. Perhaps the meaning is more seductive at the beginning of the poem, and by the end, "sueño" is literally referring to sleep, evoking a sense of calm satisfaction. Lieberson chooses to end the song with a repetition of the opening line, "reposa con tu sueño en mi sueño" (rest with your dream in my dream). This final iteration could be interpreted as "rest with your *sleep* in my *sleep*," or simply "sleep now, my love."

The opening of Lieberson's fourth song is quite abrupt, with a *forte* accented low C in the cello, followed by a rhythmic sixteenth note triplet figure in the violin, reminiscent of a heart skipping a beat at the sight of her beloved. This beckons the vocal line, followed by the return of the opening motive in the strings. The opening text, "ya eres mía," is sung four times, increasing in intensity and dynamics each time (Ex. 36). This evokes a feeling of impassioned possession by the singer. The voice comes to a state of calm after the fifth iteration. The strings summon the voice again with their accented eighth note passages in m. 8, which is an exact replica of the material in m. 4, followed by the provocative text "reposa con tu sueño en mi sueño," sung twice (Ex. 37).



Example 36: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, Opening, mm. 1 – 4 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

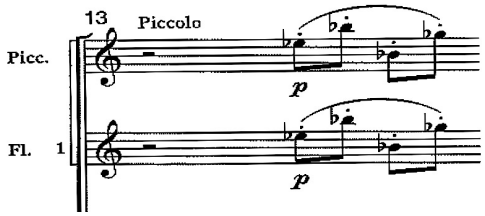


Example 37: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, "Reposa con tu sueño mm. 9 – 12 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

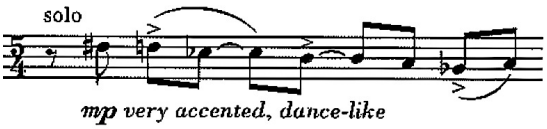
Maracas enter in m. 13 with a bossa nova rhythm, characterizing this section marked "Light, graceful" by Lieberson. The percussion should sound somewhat mysterious, as our composer indicates: "distinctly, but very discretely" (for an example of a simple bossa nova rhythm, see Example 38). This section is built on repeating motives: the piano, flute, and piccolo's fifth and minor sixth eighth note intervallic motive (which is a fragmented version of the tri-tone motive we heard in the 2nd and 3rd songs), the bass clarinet's "very accented, dance-like" descending chromatic passage, and the rhythmic ostinato in the strings carrying us through this entire section (see Examples 39 – 41). The first swell in the orchestra is ignited by the three statements of "amor" (mm. 23 – 30), increasing in pitch and intensity each time (Ex. 42).

Example 38: Bossa Nova Rhythm[114]

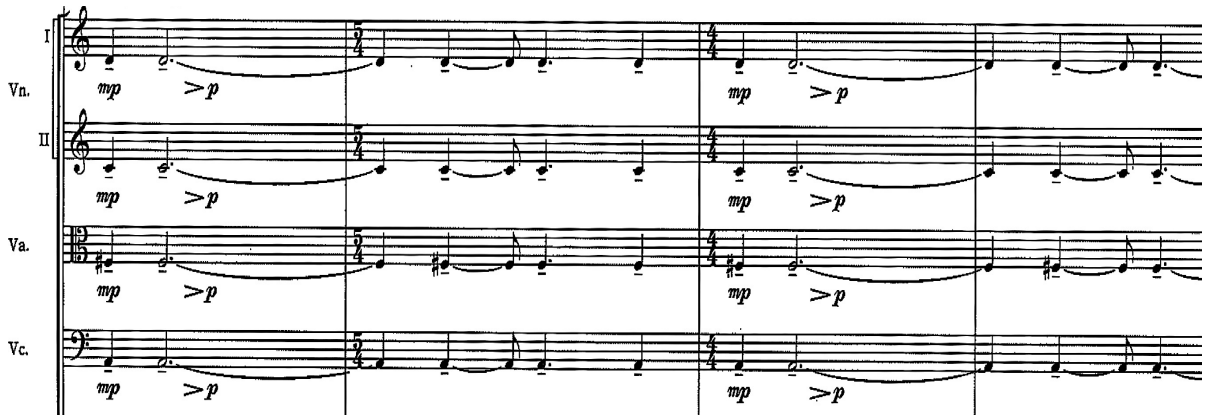
[114] Schott Music, "Exploring Latin Piano: Bossa Nova Comping Patterns," accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.schott-music.com/shop/resources/681034.pdf.



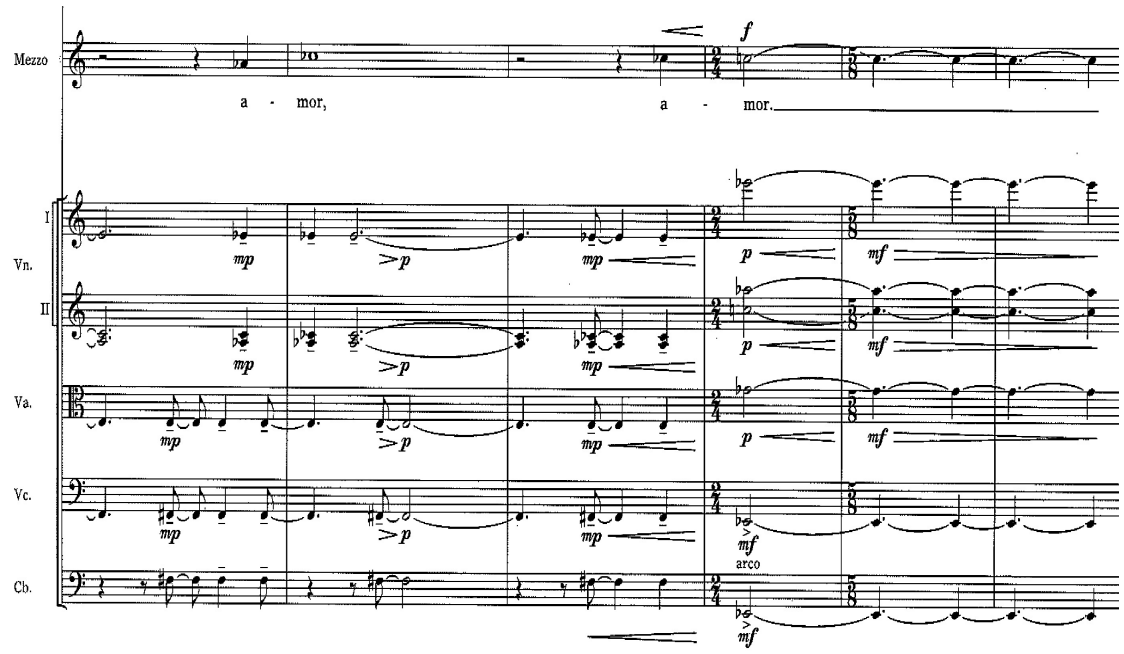
Example 39: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, Recurring Flute and Piccolo motive, m. 13 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 40: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, Recurring Bass clarinet motive, m. 14 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



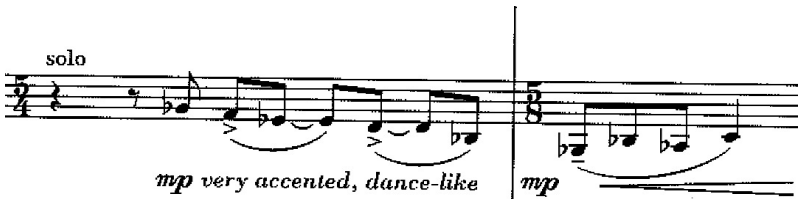
Example 41: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, Strings ostinato, mm. 13 – 16 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



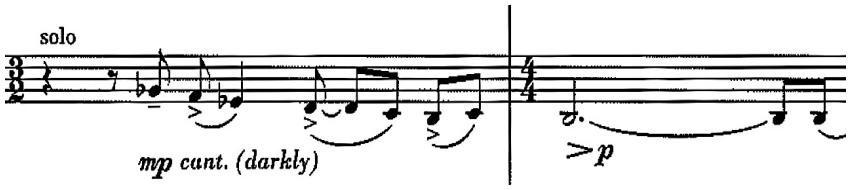
Example 42: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, "Amor" swell, mm. 25 – 32 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

Measures 31 – 37 feature a short instrumental interlude, with a syncopated "very accented, dance-like" English horn solo acting as the voice (Ex. 43). Measure 37 sees a return of the "Light, graceful" section, with the clarinet solo now playing the syncopated motive, this time marked "cantabile, (darkly)," coloring the text of the next vocal entrance, "Amor, dolor, trabajos, deben dormir ahora"[115] (Love and pain and work should all sleep now) (Ex. 44). Finally at measure 52 comes the end of the first stanza of the sonnet, with a lush, swelling *cantabile* section in the orchestra, followed by a return of the "bossa nova rhythm" in the maracas and mysterious intervallic flute motive in m. 56. The clarinet solo then acts as the voice in mm. 57 and 58, introducing the melodic passage of "ninguna más amor"[116] (no one else, love), with the voice echoing the motive up a major third, inserting a jarring tri-tone on the word "amor" (Ex. 45). The vocal line intensifies throughout this stanza, with a gradual crescendo sweeping through to the most expansive, lush orchestral interlude of the *Neruda Songs*.

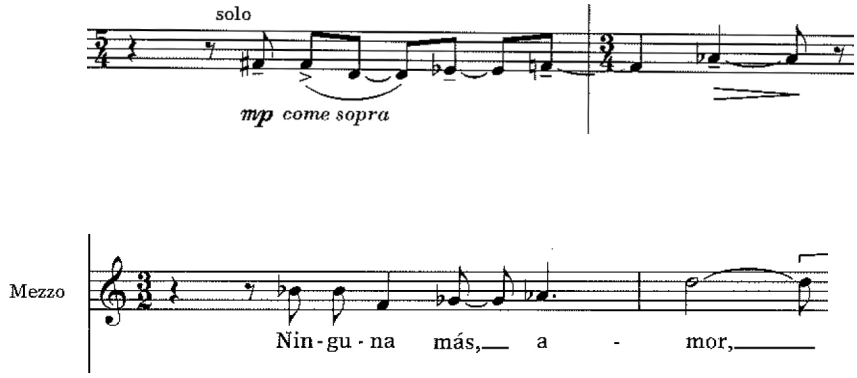
[115] Neruda, 172.
[116] Ibid.



Example 43: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, English horn solo, mm. 34 – 35 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



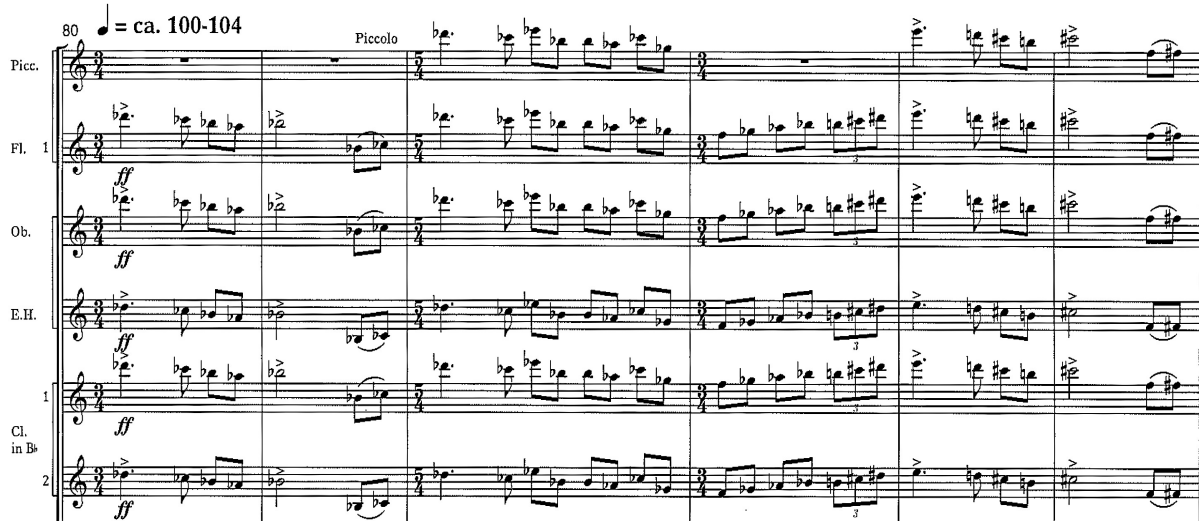
Example 44: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, Clarinet solo, mm. 39 – 40 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



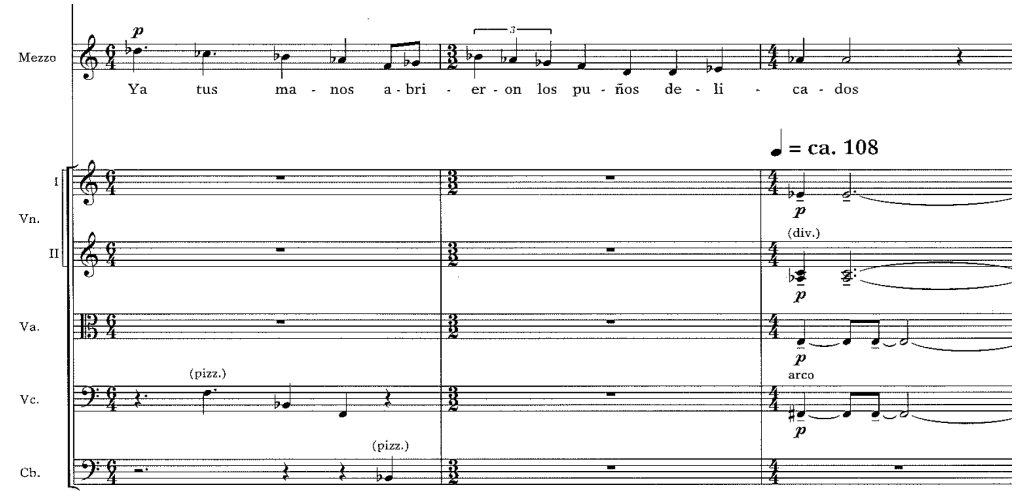
Example 45: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, "Ninguna màs, amor" clarinet and voice conversation, mm. 57 – 58 (clarinet), and mm. 59 – 61 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

The swells of passion in this interlude climax in m. 80, with a lyric, undeniably romantic melodic passage, which then climbs up a minor third (mm. 83 and 84) and repeats with some variation (Ex. 46). The intensity of this interlude could be compared to the overture of Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*, with the unison strings and swelling crescendos in the orchestra. Similarly to the first vocal entrance of *Der Rosenkavalier* (Octavian's "Wie du warst,"), the mood is again calm and somewhat hazy with the return of the mezzo-soprano voice (Ex. 47). In both cases, the tranquility of the vocal line represents the afterglow following a night of passion. The section ends with the penultimate line of the poem, "la noche,

el mundo, el viento devanan su destino"[117] (The night, the world, the wind spin out their destiny), followed by a reprise of the heated orchestral interlude, this time lasting only four measures.



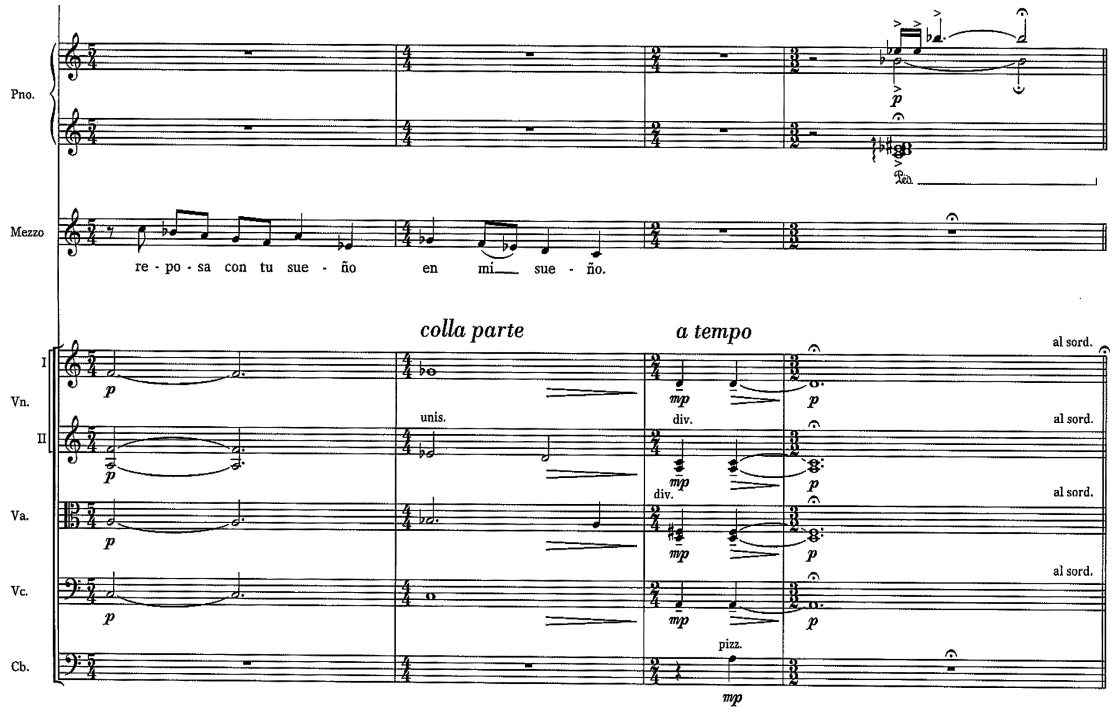
Example 46: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, climax of orchestral interlude (winds), mm. 80 – 85 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 47: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, vocal entrance following orchestral interlude, mm. 92 – 94 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

[117] Ibid.

The final line of the poem is a great contrast to the rest of the piece. Marked *meno mosso* and *colla parte*, the strings are sustaining on a tremolo. Lieberson also takes poetic license, inserting the penultimate line of poetry after the final line, and then closing with the opening text: "reposa con tu sueño, en me sueño" (Ex. 48). As previously discussed, the meaning of sueño can be interpreted as something different in this final iteration of the opening text. Perhaps this is a moment of afterglow, and the singer is inviting her lover to rest now, truly to sleep.



Example 48: "Ya eres mía," *Neruda Songs*, "Reposa con tu sueño" mm. 131 – 134 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

5. "Amor mío, si muero y tú no mueres…" / "My love, if I die and you don't die"

The breathtakingly beautiful and intimate words of this final sonnet are startlingly appropriate for the love story of Peter and Lorraine Lieberson. The main themes are love and loss, but the perspective on the death of a lover is unique, and in keeping with Peter's Buddhist beliefs. The poem speaks of the impermanence of life and love, and the acceptance that they both change, and yet they never end. According to Buddhist beliefs, "life and death are seen as one whole, where death is the beginning of another chapter of life. Death is a mirror in which the entire meaning of life is reflected."[118] Neruda implies that, after one's death, they "give back" to the earth: "This meadow where we find ourselves, O little infinity! We return." What, or who, is "little infinity?" Life itself, or the deceased lover? Neruda then plays with the different meanings of "amor:" "Pero este amor, amor no ha terminado"[119] (But this love, Love, has not ended). The first "amor" speaks of the love felt between the companions, while the second is a proper noun, "my love." The love is, in fact, our "little infinity," with no birth or end, "only changing lands lips."

The final movement is marked "sustained, peaceful" and opens with a somber string motive that recurs throughout the movement, which sounds reminiscent of a lullaby (Ex. 49). Tom Huizenga, music producer, reporter, and blogger for NPR music, described this final song of the cycle really "kind of part lullaby, almost as if he's rocking her to sleep and part tribute to love everlasting."[120] The plaintive woodwinds that we hear gradually throughout this movement are reminiscent of gentle sobs. As we see in Example 49, the opening string motive is a rocking B-G-A-G passage, and the vocal line then emerges out of the motive on a G♯, which is unexpected and a bit jarring to the ear. The singer should anticipate this entrance, and lean a bit on the G♯, to enhance the emotion of the dissonance. Lieberson again uses repetition of text for emphasis, he writes: "amor, amor mío, amor, amor mío." We hear a short interjection by the solo flute, seeming to respond to the mezzo's pleading, followed by the horn's sobbing chromatic

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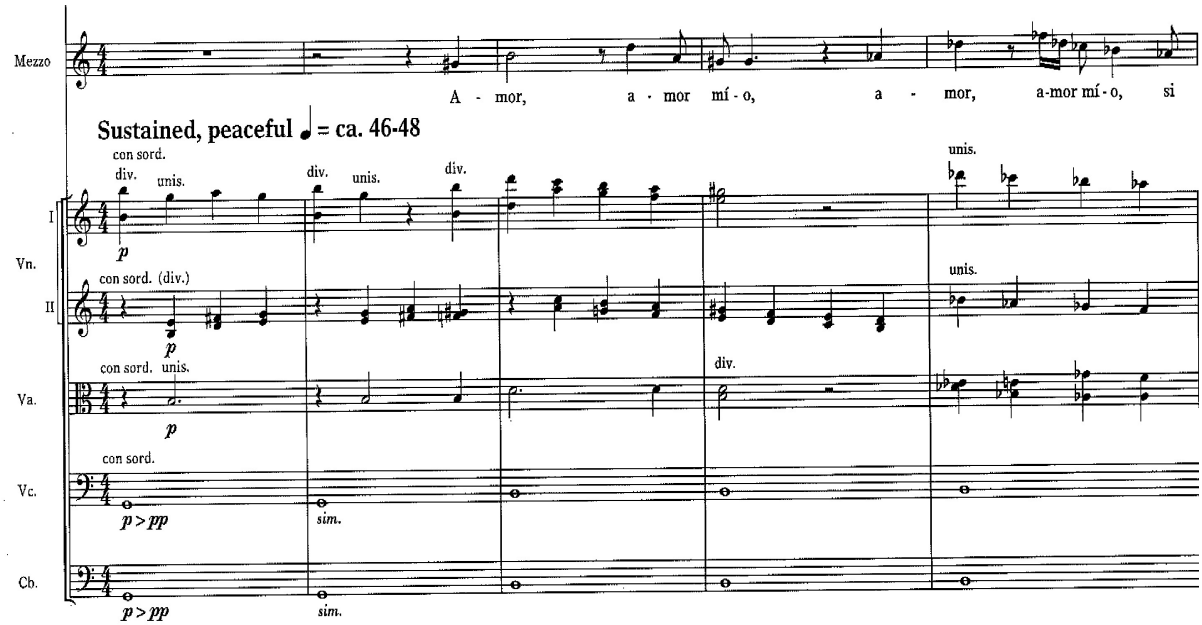
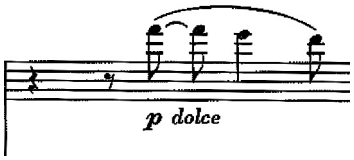
[118] Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994), 11.
[119] Neruda, 194.
[120] Tom Huizenga, "Measures of Affection: Five Musical Love Letters," *KDLG Public Radio* (transcript), February 14, 2013, accessed January 5, 2016, http://kdlg.org/post/measures-affection-five-musical-love-letters.

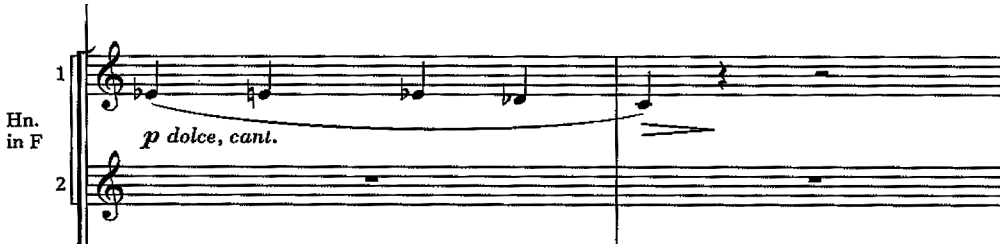
passage on the word "muero" ([I] die). Throughout this movement, the winds take turns with this lonely, sobbing descending motive (Examples 50 – 51).



Example 49: "Amor mío," ***Neruda Songs*****, Opening string motive and vocal entrance, mm. 1 – 5** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



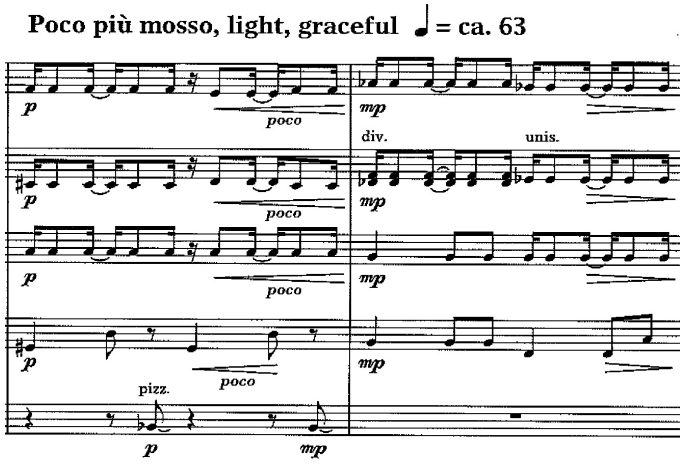
Example 50: "Amor mío," ***Neruda Songs*****, Flute solo, m. 4** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 51: "Amor mío," ***Neruda Songs*****, Horn descending chromatic passage, mm. 6 – 7** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

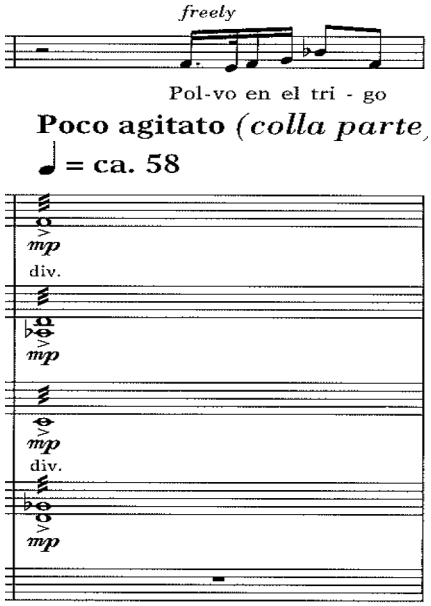
The "Poco più mosso" section is colored by a pulsating string ostinato of a sixteenth-eighth-sixteenth pattern, with a very limited melodic range (Ex. 52). The strings then fall into a tremolo at m. 25,

which begins the *Poco agitato* section, to be played *colla parte* by the orchestra. The vocal line should be sung freely, (starting with the line "polvo en el trigo") in a recitative-like style, keeping the integrity of the language (Ex. 53). This section continues through the line "Esta pradera en que nos encontramos"[121] (This meadow where we find ourselves). What follows is a *subito forte-piano* in the orchestra, and undulating thirty-second notes in the second violins and the clarinet. This spirals us to the vocal entrance, "oh, pequeño infinito!" (Oh little infinity!), which is the climactic moment of this final song. The orchestra is full and lush, doubling the vocal line on the high F♯, and the phrase is then repeated, this time with a quarter note triplet gesture beginning on the F♯, increasing the emphasis on the word "pequeño" (Ex. 54). This climactic eruption is an echo of an unforgettable moment from the first movement, "oh bien amada!" Both moments feature a major sixth leap from "Oh" to the exclamation of love. Lieberson then sets the word "devolvemos" (we return) three times, the motive transposed lower each time evoking a feeling of surrender (Ex. 55).

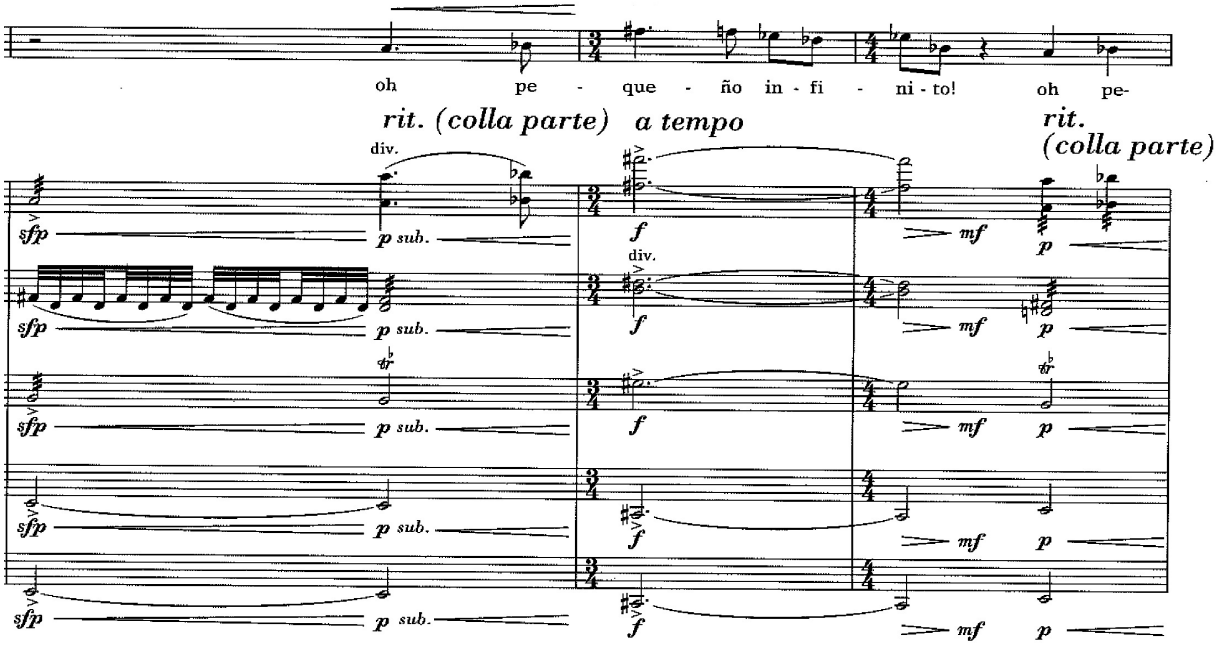


Example 52: "Amor mío," ***Neruda Songs*****, "Poco più mosso" string ostinato, mm. 20 – 21** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

[121] Neruda, 194.

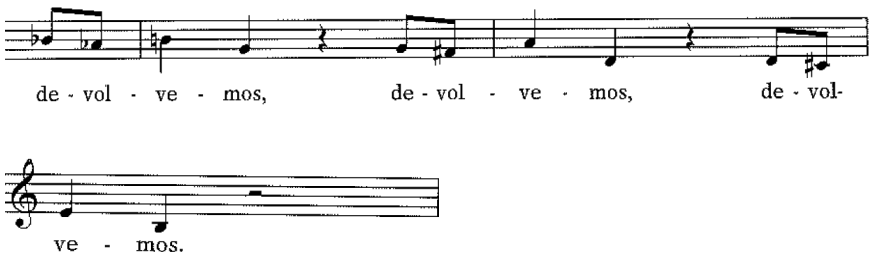


Example 53: "Amor mío," *Neruda Songs*, "Poco agitato" recitativo, m. 25 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

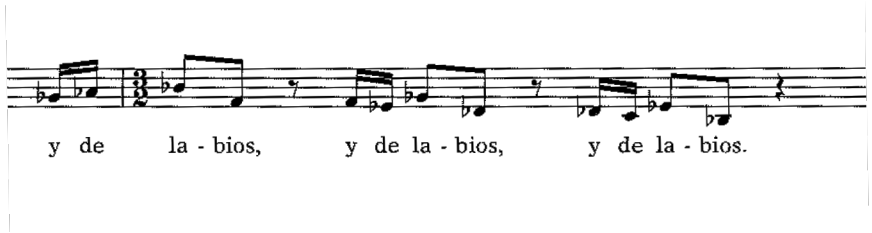


Example 54: "Amor mío," *Neruda Songs*, "Oh, pequeño infinito!" mm. 41 – 42 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

A:



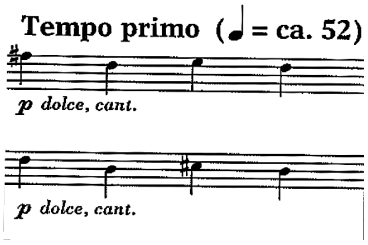
B:



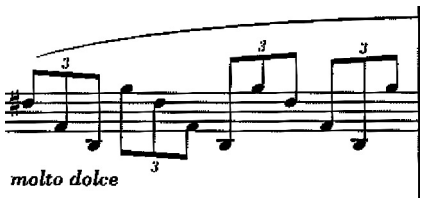
Example 55: "Amor mío," ***Neruda Songs*****, "Devolvemos" and "y de labios" comparison, A: mm. 45 – 47 and B: mm. 56 – 57** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

The mood changes in m. 49 with the line "Pero este amor, amor, no ha terminado"[122] (But this love, Love, has not ended). The rocking opening motive returns, this time in the flute, and the triplet figures in the celli create a circular movement, reflecting the never ending Love portrayed in the sonnet (Examples 56 – 57). This final stanza of the poem defines the entire cycle, and is written so delicately for the voice, with rounded triplets and chromaticism throughout, "y así como no tuvo nacimiento no tiene muerte, es como un largo río, sólo cambia de tierras y de labios"[123] (and since it never had a birth, it has no death: it is like a long river, only changing lands and lips). Lieberson sets the final phrase, "y de labios" three times, mirroring our "devolvemos" motive (Ex. 55).

[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.



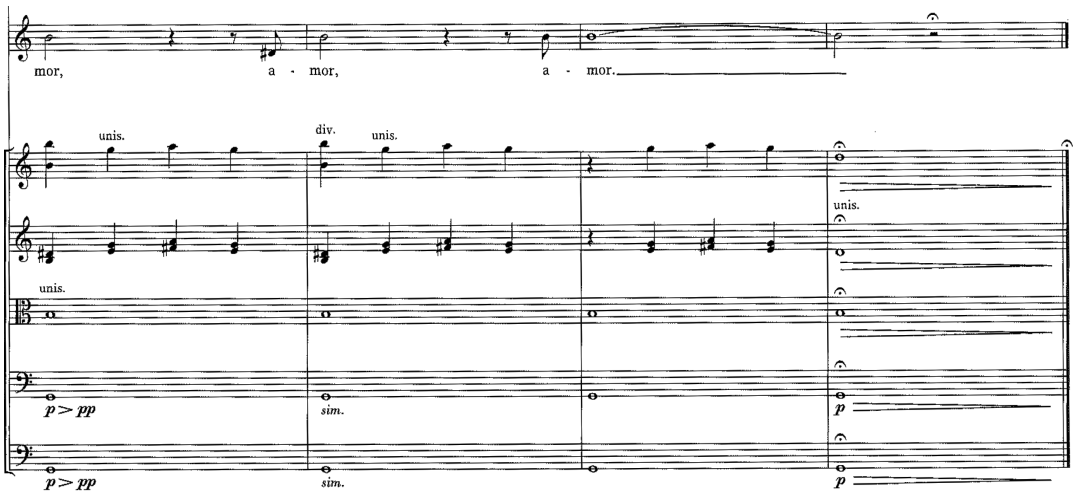
Example 56: "Amor mío," *Neruda Songs*, Rocking opening motive in flute, m. 49 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.



Example 57: "Amor mío," *Neruda Songs*, Triplet figures in cello, m. 49 © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

Lieberson then brings back the opening motive, at the "tempo primo," marked as the beginning "sustained, peaceful." The motive is now heard in the solo oboe, evoking a feeling of loneliness. Lieberson adds three repetitions of "amor" at the end of the song, with the strings playing the rocking opening motive underneath. The first two "amor" iterations are set on ascending minor sixth intervals (D♯ to B), feeling doubtful and unresolved, as if reaching toward something or someone.[124] The final "amor" then brings closure and solace, on a sustained B, with the strings enveloping the voice in a G major chord to end the cycle (Ex. 58).

[124] The first syllable of the first "amor" in Example 58 has been omitted due to a page turn. The note missing is a D♯, just as we have in the second "amor" iteration.



Example 58: "Amor mío," ***Neruda Songs*****, Final three "Amor" iterations, mm. 70 – 73** © Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

Chapter 4: THE COMPANION: *SONGS OF LOVE AND SORROW*

After careful study of Lieberson's *Neruda Songs* and their respective sonnets, we can now compare them with the baritone cycle *Songs of Love and Sorrow*. Because this cycle is the *Neruda Songs'* companion piece, I felt it was incredibly important to include a comparative analysis of the two cycles. As mentioned in my introduction, due to copyright laws, there will not be musical examples included in this portion of my document. I aimed to keep my discussion general enough that the references will be clear after my in-depth analysis of the *Neruda Songs*. In my research, I used the perusal score of the *Songs of Love and Sorrow* as a reference, along with the archived recording of Gerald Finley's world premiere performance of the cycle with the Boston Symphony; both invaluable primary resources.

In both cycles, Lieberson has chosen to set five of Neruda's *100 Love Sonnets*. While he chose not to set the companion cycle for mezzo, he designated the male vocal equivalent, the baritone voice. Both scores are in C, and the instrumentation is quite similar:

***Neruda Songs*: Instrumentation**	***Songs of Love and Sorrow*: Instrumentation**
2 Flutes (2nd doubling Piccolo)	2 Flutes (2nd doubling Piccolo)
Oboe	Oboe
English Horn	English Horn
2 Clarinets in Bb (2nd doubling Bass Clarinet)	2 Clarinets in Bb
2 Bassoons	2 Bassoons (2nd doubling Contrabassoon)
2 Horns in F	2 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in C	2 Trumpets in C
Percussion (2 players)	Timpani
Vibraphone, Glockenspiel,	Percussion (2 players)
Crotales (Gb and Ab), High	
Suspended Cymbal, Maracas,	
Low Tom-tom or Surdo	
(with Bass Drum or other large beater)	
Harp	Harp
Piano	Piano
Solo Mezzo-Soprano	Solo Baritone
Strings[125]	Strings[126]

We will approach Lieberson's *Songs of Love and Sorrow* in chronological order, drawing comparisons to the *Neruda Songs*.

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[125] Peter Lieberson, *Neruda Songs: for Mezzo-Soprano and Orchestra*, (New York: Associated Music Publishers, In., 2005), 2.
[126] Peter Lieberson, *Songs of Love and Sorrow: for Baritone and Orchestra*, (New York: Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2010), 2.

1. "De las estrellas que admire" / "Of all the stars I admired"

This opening sonnet of the cycle comes from the *Mediodía* section of the collection, and is directly preceded by "No estés lejos de mí," the center sonnet of the *Neruda Songs*. While the mood of this sonnet is starkly contrasting with "No estés…," we can find clear similarities with the opening sonnet of the *Neruda Songs*, "Si no fuera." Both sonnets open with reference to the night sky, "Si no fuera porque tus ojos tienen color de luna" (If your eyes were not the color of the moon), and here "De las estrellas que admiré" (Of all the stars I admired). The overarching sentiment in both sonnets is one of complete admiration, passion, and love. Color is introduced in the second stanza of both poems (yellow in "Si no fuera" and green in "De las estrellas"). The third stanza of both poems makes reference to rain. In "Si no fuera:" "En tu abrazo yo abrazo lo que existe, la arena, el tiempo, el arbol, de la lluvia" (In your embrace I embrace what exists, the sand, the time, the tree of the rain). And in "De las estrellas:" "Todas las gotas, todas las raíces, todos los hilos de la luz vinieron"[127] (All the water drops, all the roots, all the threads of light came). We now turn to Lieberson's musical setting of "De las estrellas," comparing it to the opening of the *Neruda Songs*.

The instrumental introduction of solo cello in "De las estrellas" is much more sorrowful than the first notes heard in the *Neruda Songs*, marked *cantabile, doloroso* by Lieberson. We could think of "De las estrellas" as a continuation of the *Neruda Songs;* in a sense, picking up where the *Neruda Songs* left us. Clarinets enter in m. 11 with a weeping gesture, followed by a descending sorrowful passage in the oboe. This contrasts with the introduction of the woodwinds in "Si no fuera," which features a pastoral *grazioso* motive in the flute. The orchestral introduction of the *Songs of Love and Sorrow* is also much more substantial in length (20 measures versus the 3 measure introduction of "Si no fuera"), featuring a horn duet just before the first vocal entrance. The vocal entrance echoes the cello solo, but then lifts to a hopeful C natural on the final syllable of "estrella."

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[127] Neruda, 98.

In both opening songs of the respective cycles, the tessitura is quite low, and the voice enters with a calm energy. While there are significant rests between phrases in the vocal line, similar to "Si no fuera," there is much more continuity in "De las estrellas:" Lieberson has chosen not to repeat the text nearly as much as he had in "Si no fuera." This is a feature that we will notice throughout the baritone cycle. Both songs play with conversation between the voice and the instruments of the orchestra, and melismatic passages are featured in the second stanza of both poems, with energy and intensity spinning forward. With the phrase "todos los hilos de la luz vinieron"[128] (all the threads of light came) we find arguably the clearest comparison between the two songs. This phrase is an echo of "oh bienamada," which is the climax of "Si no fuera." In both cases, the phrase ascends to the upper register of the voice, climaxing in the baritone cycle on the word "luz," marked tenuto for the singer and "expansively" for the orchestra. There is a lush swell in the orchestra, just as we hear at this moment in "Si no fuera." In both movements, this is a moment when time seems to stop, and the musicians should fully observe the fermata and tenuto markings for full effect.

[128] Neruda, 98.

2. "Plena mujer, manzana carnal, luna caliente……" / "Full woman, flesh-apple, hot moon"

Here is an example of some of Neruda's most erotic, sensual poetry. In his text *The Poetry of Pablo Neruda*, René de Costa wrote, "Traditionally love poetry has equated woman with nature. Neruda took this established mode of comparison and raised it to a cosmic level, making woman into a veritable force of the universe."[129] The first stanza is already full of imagery of our universe – the sky, the earth, the sea – centered around the "Full woman." The second stanza celebrates love through new images in each line, all of which involve images of nature. Similarly, the second poem of the *Neruda Songs*, "Amor, amor, las nubes a la torre del cielo," is an ecstatic celebration of love. The final two stanzas feature some of the most explicitly erotic words of the poet's love sonnets. "Beso a beso recorro tu pequeño infinito, tus márgenes, tus ríos, tus pueblos diminutos, y el fuego genital transformado en delicia"[130] (Kiss by kiss I travel your little infinity, your borders, your rivers, your tiny villages; and a genital fire – transformed, delicious). This unbridled ecstasy is portrayed so very eloquently in Lieberson's composition.

While the second songs of both the *Neruda Songs* and the *Songs of Love and Sorrow* express the excitement of a new love and celebrate nature's elements, "Plena mujer" is much more overtly sexual, and is to be sung "sensuously and rhythmically." Both instrumental introductions are very rhythmic, and marked "lightly" by Lieberson. "Plena mujer" is much more raw and earthy, with only the strings present in the 13-bar instrumental introduction, full of pulsing rhythms and chromatic movement. This sets up the first vocal entrance, which mimics the rhythmic pulses and ascending chromatic gesture of the strings. Lieberson integrates the gripping opening text "Plena mujer" (full woman) into later lines of the text, increasing the excitement and intoxication of the woman. This use of text repetition was a technique that we observed especially in the second sonnet of the *Neruda Songs*, most often with the word "amor."

Fire is an important image in both poems, and we hear the fiery, explosive passion in both second movements – the singer, in a sense, has to lose him or herself in the music, becoming swept up in the

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[129]Rene de Costa, *The Poetry of Pablo Neruda*, (Harvard: University Press: 1982), 21.
[130] Neruda, 28.

sensual text. Musical similarities are quite apparent between "Amor, amor" and "Plena mujer." In both movements, Lieberson features the clarinet throughout, including melismatic clarinet duets, and both songs spotlight melismatic gestures in the vocal line. We can also observe in both "Amor, amor" and "Plena mujer" that the end is much more subdued and mysterious in both songs, after an excited, earthy, and abrupt opening.

3. "Cantas y a sol y a cielo con tu canto…" / "You sing and to the sun and the sky with your song"

"Cantas y a sol y a cielo con tu canto" must have certainly stood out to Lieberson, as it is the only sonnet of the collection that immediately addresses the beloved's singing voice. While Lieberson gained inspiration for this second cycle of Neruda's poetry by a new love, his third wife, Rinchen Lhamo, it is quite likely that the opening lines of this poem spoke to him as memories of Lorraine, who was lauded for her incomparable expressive singing. Found in the *Mediodía* section of the book, "Cantas, y a sol y a cielo…" is more closely related to the fourth poem of the *Neruda Songs* ("Ya erés mia") as opposed to the third, possessing overarching sentiments of praise and rejoicing. In the final stanzas of both poems, the lover is being swept away by his beloved; in "Ya eres mía" by the sea: "mientras yo sigo el agua que llevas y me lleva"[131] (while I follow the water you carry, that carries me away), and in "Cantas" by the sky: "vuelve tu voz cargada de violetas, y luego me acompaña por el cielo"[132] (and your voice returns loaded with violets: It accompanies me through the sky.)

The instrumental introduction is much more energized and substantial in the introduction of the center song of the baritone cycle. The sweeping triplets and chromatic ascent bring forth the vibrant vocal entrance, "Cantas, cantas," which echoes the first entrance of the mezzo voice in "Ya eres mía." The orchestra continues relentlessly spinning forward throughout the first stanza of poetry, until coming to a sudden *molto allargando* at m. 39, informed by the text "El mar llena sus sótanos de pasos"[133] (the sea

[131] Neruda, 110.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid.

fills its cellar of footsteps), which is, in this case, reminiscent of the "el mar" section of the second song of the *Neruda Songs*. The sudden sense of calm intoxication is indicative of Neruda's adoration for the sea. In fact, Neruda has played with sea imagery in each of the sonnets discussed thus far in *Songs of Love and Sorrow*. Lieberson makes brilliant use of the percussion in this "sea" stanza. We hear the "bells, chains, whimpers, the tools and the metals" described in the sonnet in the tubular bells, sleigh bells, and cymbal of the percussion section of the orchestra.

Lieberson then reprises the opening instrumental introduction, and "Cantas, cantas," followed by an extensive, lush interlude, which evokes the stimulated awakenings of the interlude of "Ya eres mía." This interlude again features swelling crescendos in the unison strings and use of the full orchestra. Just as the voice enters calmly with a descending gesture in the afterglow in "Ya eres mía," the baritone's vocal entrance is quite tranquil in m. 80 with the text "Pero solo tu voz escucho"[134] (but I hear only your voice). In the final four measures of "Cantas," "y luego me acompaña por el cielo"[135] (It [your voice] accompanies me through the sky) we hear the voice ascending "through the sky," and the last four measures of "Ya eres mía" features a descending vocal line, painting the picture of resting "with your dream [sleep], in my dream [sleep]." Both pieces end with a light, shimmery gesture in the piano, enhanced by high woodwinds and sustained strings.

4. "Tal vez no ser es ser sin que tú seas" / "Maybe nothingness is to be without your presence"

Found in the *Tarde* (Evening) section of the book, "Tal vez no ser es ser sin que tú seas" (Maybe nothingness is to be without your presence) echoes themes we discovered in "No estés lejos de mí," namely the fear of pain and separation, as a result of completely abandoning oneself to love. The beauty of this sonnet lies in Neruda's use of color, creating vivid, compelling imagery. The poet has painted the first stanza blue, "como una flor azul,"[136] (like a blue flower), a color that we have seen repeatedly

[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid., 146.

throughout the sonnets. Stanza two is ornamented with gold, "sin esa luz que llevas en la mano que tal vez otros no verán dorada,"[137] (without the light you carry in your hand, maybe others will not see gold) and red, "como el origen rojo de la rosa,"[138] (like red beginnings of a rose). Neruda reprises the rose imagery in the third stanza "ráfaga de rosal, trigo del viento"[139] (gust of a rosebush, wheat of wind), and the final stanza is a beautiful summary of the sentiment expressed in this poem.

The opening vocal line is an echo of the cello solo at the outset of the first movement, bringing poignant continuity to the cycle. The exposure and vulnerability of the vocal line are reminiscent of the opening of the comparable song, "No estés lejos de mí." Both initial vocal entrances are also in the low middle voice, accompanied by low, sustained strings. The "lonely woodwind cries" of "No estés lejos de mí" are also present in the opening of "Tal vez." Lieberson uses the English horn to double the vocal line in m. 6, creating the "blue flower" imagery. We then hear elements of the golden light in m. 21, featured in the oboe, followed by a shimmering flute duet in the following measure. The "red beginnings of a rose" are presented by the upper strings with a dramatic contrasting motive of chromatic sextuplets. In both pieces, the dynamic intensity ebbs and flows; the music informed wholly by the text.

Throughout their love affair, Matilde and Pablo spoke often of each other's presence, even in their physical absence of one another.[140] This sentiment is reflected poignantly in the final line of the poem, "y por amor, seré, serás, seremos"[141] (and through love I will be, you will be, we'll be). These are words in which Lieberson also found great solace, as he repeats the line in the song, set to the most melodious passage, first set off by a perfect fifth, and then a major seventh, doubled by the violin I and viola. Lieberson ends the fourth song with the opening vocal motive, this time played as a cello solo, mirroring the end of the first song of the cycle. This song's ending also reminds us of the final three bars of "No estés lejos de mí," which echoes the opening motive, this time in the vocal line.

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[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Giardino, xv.
[141] Neruda, 146.

5. "Amor mío, al cerrar esta puerta nocturna…" / "My love, as we close this nocturnal door"

Echoes of Lieberson's Buddhist beliefs are ever-present in this final sonnet of the cycle. Peter explains, "'We're always saying adios every time we close the door…we say goodbye to our lover – adios – we say goodbye to our parents – adios. And one of my teachers said, always smile when you say goodbye because you never know if it's the last time.'"[142] The Buddha said of death: "Life is a journey. Death is a return to earth. The universe is like an inn. The passing years are like dust."[143] Lieberson increases the sentiment of impermanence by inserting the word "adiós" four times at the end of the song. Creating a very similar sentiment to the final "amor" iterations of the final song of the *Neruda Songs*.

The final songs of both cycles feature a recurring motive that is evocative of a lullaby. In the final song of *Neruda* it is introduced at the very opening, and in this closing song of the *Songs of Love and Sorrow*, the lullaby is first featured in the oboe in m. 12. The mood of the baritone song is more earthy and passionate than that of the mezzo cycle, which is evident by the horn solo, opening the final song. In both songs, Lieberson has written the highest tessitura for the voice, enhancing a sense of vulnerability and raw emotion in the voice. An outburst of emotion occurs in both songs, "Oh pequeño infinito" in the *Neruda Songs* and "salud oh sombra"[144] (welcome, oh shadow) in *Songs of Love and Sorrow*. In the baritone song, the haunting cello solo, which we've heard in the first and fourth songs returns in m. 46 of the final song, seeming to evoke a sense of calm, which is followed by the anchor stanza of the sonnet, "En esta nave o agua o muerte o nueva vida, una vez más unidos, dormidos, resurrectos"[145] (In this ship, or water, or death, or new life, we are united again, asleep, resurrected). Lieberson's brilliant use of the cello motive in this cycle is a reminder of the interconnectedness of life and love; Lieberson could have never predicted that his life would turn out the way it did, and yet he found inspiration throughout his unwritten journey to write two cycles that are intimately connected in so many ways.

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[142] Andrea Shea, "Songs of Love and Sorrow…and Love Again."
[143] "Buddhist Beliefs," Religion Facts, accessed January 5, 2016 http://www.religionfacts.com/buddhism/beliefs.
[144] Neruda, 174.
[145] Ibid.

The final five measures of both closing songs are profoundly similar. The voice repeats the final word, “amor” and “adiós” respectively, over the rocking lullaby motive. The final syllable is sustained so delicately, with G major underneath in both final songs. It is a breathtakingly simplistic way to end such complex cycles of music. There is such a humanistic element to Lieberson’s cycles; he wants his singer to feel vulnerable in that final moment, and the audience to have a moment of reflection and acceptance after going on this complex journey of love with the singer and the orchestra.

CONCLUSION

> We had a very short time together…In some sense, we only had nine years. But, in many other ways, it was very full, because we were together almost continuously. And, after I heard these pieces and the way she sang them, there was a sense of completion. A sense that I finally had done what I really wanted to do and I was able to express my love for Lorraine in music.[146] – Peter Lieberson

Peter Lieberson's two song cycles are some of the most deeply personal, intimate love songs ever written. Inspired by the language of Pablo Neruda, Peter Lieberson found a new musical language of his own in these songs, which allowed him to fully express his deep devotion and love for Lorraine. Both Peter and Lorraine have left behind a lasting legacy, and we are so fortunate to have access to a number of primary sources (i.e. original recordings, interviews, and reviews) to really understand the emotional complexity behind the songs, and the musical language used by Lieberson. Lorraine Hunt Lieberson is one of the most expressive singers of our generation, and any student or professional singer should spend time with the recording of her performance of the *Neruda Songs* for a lesson in using colors of the voice to create intimate relationships between words and music.

Understanding the full score in great detail for both cycles also allows for a more fulfilling experience for the singer in the rehearsal process and performance. Too often there is a great barrier between singers and the orchestra. In these pieces where there is so much conversation between the voice and solo instruments, a true collaboration must be present. Also understanding wholly the full orchestral score will aid in memorization of the cycles, in that the singer will be more conscious of specific motives and conversations with the instruments. This will allow the singer more freedom to lose him or herself in the music, and not focus so much on rigid counting. In the future, if copyright laws allow, I would love to see these two cycles performed together on a program, as it would be a profound experience for performers and audience members alike.

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[146] Lunden, "Lieberson's 'Neruda Songs.'"

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